1: Thurston & Rangachari E,G-4,5 (no date) 1909
AW50 Badaga AW50

neighbourhood of these cromlechs for their temples, as for example, at Mēlūr, Kakūsi, H'laiuru, Tudūr, and Jakatāda.

It is recorded *, in connection with the legends of the Badagas, that "in the heart of the Banagudi shōla, not far from the Doddūru group of cromlechs, is an odd little shrine to Karairāya, consisting of a ruined stone hut surrounded by a low wall, within which are a tiny cromlech, some sacred water-worn stones, and sundry little pottery images representing a tiger, a mounted man, and some dogs. These keep in memory, it is said, a Badaga who was slain in combat with a tiger; and annually a festival is held, at which new images are placed there, and vows are paid. A Kurumba makes fire by friction and burns incense, throws sanctified water over the numerous goats brought to be sacrificed, to see if they will shiver in the manner always held necessary in sacrificial victims, and then slays, one after the other, those which have shown themselves duly qualified. Hulikal Drūg, usually known as the Drūg, is a precipitous bluff at the very end of the range which borders on the south the great ravine which runs up to Coonoor. It is named from the neighbouring village of Hulikal, or tiger's stone, and the story goes that this latter is so called because in it a Badaga killed a notorious man-eater which had long been the terror of the country side. The spot where the beast was buried is shown near the Pillaiyar temple to the south of Hulikal village, and is marked by three stones. Burton says there used formerly to be a stone image of the slain tiger thereabouts. Some two miles south-east of Kōnakarai in a place known as Kōttai-hāda, or the fort flat, lie

* Gazetteer of the Nilgiris.

241 the neighbourhood of Kotagiri have their Hiriya Udaya
•796 temple at Tāndanād, and Mahālingaswāmi temple at Kannērmukku. This Devvē festival, which should on no account be pronounced duvve, which means burning-ground, is celebrated at one place, whither the Badagas from other villages proceed, to take part in it. About midday, some Badagas and the temple pūjāri go from the temple of Hiriya Udaya to that of Mahālingaswāmi.
(781) The procession is usually headed by a Kurumba, who scatters fragments of tūd bark and wood as he goes
(782) on his way. The pūjāri takes with him the materials necessary for doing pūja, and, after worshipping Mahālingaswāmi, the party return to the Hiriya Udaya temple, where milk and cooked rice are offered to the various gods within the temple precincts. On the following day, all assemble at the temple, and a Kurumba brings a few sheaves of *Setaria italica*, and ties them to a stone set up at the main entrance. After this, pūja is done,
(612) and the people offer cocoanuts to the god. Later on, all the women of the Madhave sept, who have given birth to a first-born child, come, dressed up in holiday attire, with their babies, to the temple. On this day they wear a special nose ornament, called elemukkuththi, which is only worn on one other occasion, at the funeral of a husband. The women do pūja to Hiriya Udaya, and the pūjāri gives them a small quantity of rice on mīnige (*Argyreia*) leaves. After eating this, they leave the temple in a line, and wash their hands with water given to them by the pūjāri. This ceremonial, performed by women of the Madhave sept, is called Mandē-dhanda. As soon as the Devvē festival is concluded, the reaping of the crop commences, and a measure or two of grain from the crop gathered on the first day, called nīsal, is set apart for the Mahālingaswāmi temple.

The most important gods of the Badagas are Heththeswāmi, Mahālingaswāmi, Hiriya Udaya, Mādeswara, Mānkāli, Jadeswāmi, and Nīlgiri Rangaswāmi. And at the present day, some Badagas proceed to the plains, to worship at the Saivite temple at Karamadai in Coimbatore, or at Nanjangōd in Mysore.

The festival in honour of Heththeswāmi is celebrated in the month of January at Baireganni. It is sometimes called ermathohabba, as, with it, ploughing operations cease. It always commences on a Monday, and usually lasts eight days. A Sēdan or Dēvānga weaver comes with his portable hand-loom, and sufficient thread for weaving a dhubati (coarse cloth) and turban. At Baireganni there is a special house, in which these articles are woven. But, at other places where the festival is observed, the Badagas go to the weaver's village to fetch the required cloths. Early on the second morning of the festival, some of the more respected Badagas and the weaver proceed to the weaving house after bathing. The weaver sets up his loom, and worships it by offering incense, and other things. The Badagas give him a new cloth, and a small sum of money, and ask him to weave a dhubati and two kachches (narrow strips of cloth). Daily, throughout the festival, the Badagas collect near the temple, and indulge in music and songs. Until the last day, they are not permitted to set eyes on the god Heththeswāmi. On the morning of the last day, the pūjāri, accompanied by all the Badagas, takes the newly woven cloths to a stream, in which they are washed. When they are dry, all proceed to the temple, where the idol is dressed up in them, and all, on this occasion only, are allowed to look at it. Devotees pay a small offering of money, which is placed on a tray near the idol. The crowd begins to disperse in

1: Thurston & Rangachari E,G-4,5 (no date) 1909
AW50 Badaga AW50

(796) the afternoon, and, on their way back to their villages, the wants of the travellers are attended to by people posted at intervals with coffee, fruit, and other articles of food. If the Badagas have to go to a weaver's village for the cloths, the weaver is, when the order is given for them, presented with four annas, after he has bathed. When handing the money to him, the Badagas bawl out "This is the fee for making the cloths to be worn by Heththe Iramāsthi and Parasakti Parvati." On the last day of the festival, the cloths are washed, and one of them is made to represent an idol, which is decorated (782) with waist and neck ornaments, and an umbrella. All prostrate themselves before it, and make offerings of money. Fruits and other things are then offered to Heththeswāmi and some recite the following prayer. "May all good acts be remembered, and all bad ones be forgotten. Though there may be a thousand and one sins, may I reach the feet of God."

The following further information in connection with the Baireganni festival is given by Bishop Whitehead. "The people from other villages offer money, rice, fruits, umbrellas of gold or silver for the goddess, cloths, and buffaloes. The buffaloes are never killed, but remain as the property of the temple. The pūjāri calls the representatives of one village, and tells them what Hetheswāmi says to him, *e.g.*, 'This year you will have good [or bad] crops; cholera or small-pox, good [or bad] rain, (782) etc.' As the people present their offerings, they prostrate themselves, kneeling down and touching the ground with their foreheads, and the pūjāri gives them some flowers, which they wear in their hair. The people and the pūjāri play on the kombu [horn], and ring bells (535) while the offerings are being made. After the offerings have finished, all the men dance, in two companies, in

front of the temple, one shouting 'How-ko, How-ko,' and the other 'Is-hōli.' The dance was taught them by the Todas, and the words are Toda."

In connection with the Jadeswāmi festival the ceremony of walking through fire [burning embers] is carried out at Mēlūr, Tangālu, Mainelē, Jakkanāre, Tenād, and Nidugala. At Mēlūr and Tangālu, the temples belong to the Hāruvas, who carry out all the details of ceremony. The temple at Tenād is owned by the Udayas, by whom the ceremonial is performed. In other places, the celebrants are Badagas. The festival is observed, on an elaborate scale, at Nidugala during the month of January. All those who are going to walk over the burning embers fast for eight days, and go through the rite on the ninth day. For its performance, Monday is considered an auspicious day. The omens are taken by boiling two pots of milk side by side on two hearths. If the milk overflows uniformly on all sides, the crops will be abundant for all the villages. But, if it flows over on one side only, there will be plentiful crops for villages on that side only. The space over which the embers are spread is said to be about five yards long, and three yards broad. But, in some places, *e.g.*, Jakkanāre and Mēlūr, it is circular as at the Muhammadan fire-walking ceremony. For making the embers, the wood of *Eugenia Jambolana* and *Phyllanthus Emblica* are used. For boiling the milk, and setting fire to the wood, a light obtained by friction must be used. The process is known as niligolu, or upright stick. The vertical stick is made of a twig of *Rhodomyrtus tomentosus*, which is rotated in a socket in a long thick piece of a bough of *Debregeasia velutina*, in which a row of sockets has been made. The rotation is produced by a cord passed several times round the vertical stick, of

1: Thurston & Rangachari E,G-4,5 (no date) 1909
AW50 Badaga AW50

372 which each end is pulled alternately. The horizontal block is pressed firmly on the ground by the toes of a man, who presses a half cocoanut shell down on the top of the vertical stick, so as to force it down into the socket. A Badaga, who failed in an attempt to demonstrate the making of fire by this method, gave as an excuse that he was under worldly pollution, from which he would be free at the time of the fire-walking ceremony. Though the Badagas make fire by friction, reference is made in their folk legends, not to this mode of obtaining fire, but to chakkamukki (flint and steel), which is repeatedly referred to in connection with cremation. After the milk boiling ceremonial, the pūjāri, tying bells on his legs, approaches the fire pit, carrying milk freshly drawn from a cow, which has calved for the first time, and flowers of *Rhododendron arboreum*, *Leucas aspera*, or jasmine. After doing pūja, he throws the flowers on the embers, and they should remain unscorched for a few seconds. He then pours some of the milk over the embers, and no hissing sound shoud be produced. The omens being propitious, he walks over the glowing embers, followed by an Udaya, and the crowd of celebrants, who, before going through the ordeal, count the hairs on their feet. If any are singed, it is a sign of approaching ill fortune, or even death. In an account of the fire-walking ceremony, in 1902, it is noted that "the Badagas strongly repudiate the insinuation of preparing their feet to face the fire ordeal. It is done to propitiate Jeddayswāmi, to whom vows are invoked, in token of which they grow one twist or plait of hair, which is treasured for years, and finally cut off as an offering to Jeddayswāmi. Numbers of Chettis were catering to the crowd, offering their wares, bangles, gay-coloured handkerchiefs, as well as edibles. The Kotas supplied the music, and an

789 796 787 789 796 (782) (177)

1: Thurston & Rangachari E,G-4,5 (no date) 1909
AW50 Badaga AW50

789 ancient patriarch worked himself up to a high pitch of
796 inspiration, and predicted all sorts of good things for
(177) the Badagas with regard to the ensuing season and crops."

703 The following legend, relating to the fire-walking
(789) ceremony, is recorded by Bishop Whitehead. "When they first began to perform the ceremony fifty or sixty years ago, they were afraid to walk over the fire. Then the stone image of Mahālinga Swāmi turned into a snake, and made a hole through the temple wall. It came out, and crawled over the fire, and then went back to the temple. Then their fear vanished, and they walked over the embers. The hole is still to be seen in the temple."

789 Of the fire-walking ceremony at Mēlūr, the following
796 account is given in the Gazetteer of the Nīlgiris. "It takes place on the Monday after the March new moon, just before the cultivation season begins, and is attended by Badagas from all over Mērkunād. The inhabitants of certain villages (six in number), who are supposed to be the descendants of an early Badaga named Guruvajja, have first, however, to signify through their Gottukārs, or headmen, that the festival may take place; and the Gottukārs choose three, five, or seven men to walk through the fire. On the day appointed, the fire is lit by certain Badaga priests and a Kurumba. The men chosen by the Gottukārs then bathe, adorn themselves with sandal, do obeisance to the Udayas of Udayarhatti near Kēti, who are specially invited and feasted; pour into the adjacent stream milk from cows which have calved for the first time during the year; and, in the afternoon, throw more milk and some flowers from the Mahālingasvāmi temple into the fire pit, and then walk across it. Earth is next thrown on the embers, and they walk across

789 twice more. A general feast closes the ceremony, and
•796 next day the first ploughings are done, the Kurumba
sowing the first seeds, and the priests the next lot.
(241) Finally, a net is brought. The priest of the temple,
standing over it, puts up prayers for a favourable agricul-
796 tural season; two fowls are thrown into it, and a pretence
782 is made of spearing them; and then it is taken and put
across some game path, and some wild animal (a sāmbhar
deer if possible) is driven into it, slain, and divided
among the villagers. This same custom of annually
killing a sāmbhar is also observed at other villages on
the plateau, and in 1883 and 1894 special orders were
passed to permit of its being done during the close
789 season. Latterly, disputes about precedence in the matter
796 of walking through the fire at Mēlūr have been carried
(578) as far as the civil courts, and the two factions celebrate
the festival separately in alternate years. A fire-walking
ceremony also takes place annually at the Jadayasvāmi
temple in Jakkanēri under the auspices of a Sivāchāri
(231) Badaga. It seems to have originally had some connec-
tion with agricultural prospects, as a young bull is made
to go partly across the fire-pit before the other devotees,
and the owners of young cows which have had their
first calves during the year take precedence of others
in the ceremony, and bring offerings of milk, which are
sprinkled over the burning embers."

796 At the Sakalathi festival, in the month of October,
(824) Badagas, towards evening, throw on the roofs of their
houses flowers of *Plectranthus Wightii*, *Crotalaria obtecta*,
Lobelia nicotianæfolia, *Achyranthes aspera*, and *Leucas*
aspera. On the following day, they clean their houses,
and have a feast. In the afternoon, numbers of them
may be seen in the streets drawing in front of their
houses pictures in wood-ashes of buffaloes, bulls, cows,

796 ploughs, stars, sun and moon, snakes, lizards, etc. They then go into their houses, and wash their hands. Taking up in his clean hands a big cake, on which are placed a little rice and butter, the Badaga puts on it three wicks steeped in castor oil, and lights them. The cake is then waved round the heads of all the children of the house taken to a field, and thrown therein with the words "Sakalathi has come." The cake-thrower returns home, and prostrates himself before a lamp placed in the inner room, and repeats a long formula, composed of the various synonyms of Siva.

(262) In the month of November, a festival called Dodda Habba (big feast) is celebrated. In the afternoon, rice is cooked in whey within the hāgōttu, and eaten on mīnige leaves. Throughout the day the villagers play at various ball games.

796 782 A festival, which is purely local, is celebrated near Konakore in honour of Mahangkāli. A buffalo is led to the side of a precipice, killed by a Kurumba with a spear, and thrown over the edge thereof. There is a legend 773 that, in olden days, a pūjāri used to put a stick in the crevice of a rock, and, on removing it, get the value of a buffalo in fanams (gold coins). But, on one occasion, he put the stick in a second time, in the hopes of gaining more money. No money, however, was forthcoming and, as a punishment for his greed, he died on the spot.

881 (841) (349) All Badaga villages, except those of the Udayas, have a hut, called holagudi, for the exclusive use of women during their monthly periods. A few months before a girl is expected to reach puberty, she is sent to the holagudi, on a Friday, four or five days before the new moon day. This is done lest, in the ordinary course of events, the first menstruation should commence on an inauspicious day. The girl remains in the holagudi one

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

614 3,500 people who inhabit sixteen villages scattered across the plateau. Though they should only marry with Ha:ruvas or (162) Kaṇakkas, in the past eighty years a few Adikiri people have married girls from Lingayat families in Mysore villages. It is rare on the other hand for a girl to go from the Nilgiris to Mysore in marriage. There have also been a few irregular cases of vegetarian Adikiris marrying meat-eating Gaudas (but never meat-eating Adikiris).

(621) The Adikiri villages come closer to being a corporate group than any of the other clans, except for the two tiny phratries of Kumba:ras and Be:das. This solidarity stems from the fact that Adikiris, alone of all the clans, hold an 'annual reunion'. Every (796) November they go to the village of Nellitore, on the Coimbatore Plain, to worship at the place where a Lingayat saint was drowned. It was from this point that the original six Adikiris started up into the Nilgiris.[14] Today it is obligatory for at least a few men from each Adikiri village to attend the annual function, to which members of other Badaga clans are also welcome.

(771) Despite this demonstration of Adikiri solidarity there have been several defections from the clan and its Lingayat values. In one village (Sakkata) Adikiris married with Toreas a few generations ago and now are treated as Toreas although sometimes called Adikiris. In one other Gauda village (So:lu:ru) Adikiris have intermarried with meat-eating Gaudas. In both these situations the soi-disant Adikiris are no longer vegetarians or Lingayats (Metz, 1864, 50–51). The three other meat-eating Adikiri villages do not dine with Toreas, but they may take a meal in the inner room of a Gauda house. In two villages of vegetarian Adikiris the *linga* is not worn, but the inhabitants retain the name and status of Adikiris and belong to the same clan, though they are not considered Lingayat.[15]

614 Adikiris and Kanakkas eat only in the houses of Wodeas,
264 Ha:ruvas and Koṅgaru, where they can feel sure of receiving the correctly prepared vegetarian dishes. Adikiris, like Kaṇakkas, admit Ha:ruvas, Kaggusis and other Lingayats to the inner room for meals (though Wodeas refuse to eat with them). Meat-eating Adikiris, Gaudas and Toreas, as well as Todas, may only eat in the outer room, while other Nilgiri tribesmen may not enter the house at all.

KAṆAKKAS

614 There are perhaps three thousand Kaṇakkas. Although now
(162)

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

The role of the Kotas in Badaga ritual is, or at least was until 1930, a crucial one, since custom required that Kotas provide the music at Badaga funerals, weddings and certain festivals (Ward, 1821, lxxvii; Harkness, 1832, 78–79).

Badaga funerals take place in the village of the dead person. Whether they involve the Lingayat practice of inhumation or the general Shaivite practice of cremation, the ritual is not considered completely performed if a Kota band does not come to play dance music and lead the cortège. Thus as soon as a Badaga dies his village headman sends out word of the funeral plans, not only to other Badaga villages but also to the Kota partner of the dead person. This man will then arrange a party of eight Kota musicians to play at the funeral. The partner himself attends the ceremony but usually does not play an instrument then, for he is in mourning for his friend. The band regularly consists of two flutes, two drums, two tambourines (beaten with sticks) and two horns. The bandsmen go immediately to the bereaved house and there play music suitable for dancing.[10] It is a rule that the corpse should not be removed from the house until this performance has begun. However, if the funeral is to be on a lavish scale, word of it may have to be sent great distances—formerly by messengers on foot—and the Kotas will then have to play for two or three days before the main obsequies begin. Each time a party of visitors arrives from another village the Kota musicians go out with the headman a short way to welcome them. At night the Kotas light a fire on a veranda for warmth and sleep there if need be. If the dead man was rich his Kota partner may honour him by bringing two bands of musicians who take turns in playing through the night as well as the day. Once the corpse has been brought out in front of the house music is played for several hours while Badaga men dance around the catafalque. Each time the corpse is moved on for the next stage of the complex ritual it must be preceded by the band. When the corpse has finally been disposed of the Kotas return to their homes; they have not set foot on the burial or cremation ground and never enter a Badaga house.

There are certain definite articles that a Kota is required to bring to his Badaga partner's funeral. If the deceased was a male of a meat-eating (and so formerly a hunting) phratry, the Kota brings a roughly made bow and arrow to be burnt with the corpse.

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

177 formerly a common practice for rich Badagas to hire forty or fifty
[684] Todas to go on wife-stealing expeditions, and carry off by force the wives of other Badagas' (Metz, 1864, 75). Today, while the practice of stealing wives may continue, assistance from the Todas is no longer required. A parallel situation in which gangs of Badagas used to help Todas steal wives is also recalled. In either case the assistants each received a few rupees.

[181] Badagas are very fond of betting; and so when they meet
[609] informally a Badaga and a Toda sometimes have a bet over the possibility of their performing some athletic feat, such as lifting a boulder (Rivers, 1906, 597–598).

Medicine is another matter that can bring Todas and Badagas together. Although Todas have therapists in their own tribe they occasionally go to Badagas noted for particular kinds of cure (Rivers, 1906, 323, 634–635; for details of Badaga therapy, see Hockings, 1979b). A Badaga partner may help the Toda arrange treatment; but the therapist himself usually expects some fee or present from the patient.

Todas are considered moderately powerful sorcerers, despite
[648] their own recent disclaimers. It was for this reason that the parties of Badagas who went to massacre Kurumbas always included one or two Toda associates to deliver 'the first blow'.[12] This practice has not recurred since 1900; nor have Badagas murdered a Toda sorcerer since that time.

A few affluent Todas (affluent because of illicit land rentals)[13] now live in Badaga-style brick houses instead of the customary thatched huts, as the houses are more spacious and comfortable. This habit began some eighty years ago (Rivers, 1906, 29, 634). The Badaga-style houses (distinct from modern government-financed housing) are built in a Toda hamlet by Badagas hired for the purpose but not necessarily by a man's Badaga partner.

Ritual Interaction

177 A common setting for interaction between the two communities is
• 996 ceremonial. On some Badaga festival days the Toda may be required to bring the sticks and make fire by friction or perhaps
[224] bring a new milking vessel. For the annual hunting ceremony of Be:da Sa:mi held by both Badagas and Kotas, the Toda used to bring clarified butter to smear on the weapons. Even so, no very

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

crucial part is played by either community in the ceremonies of the other. A Badaga partner and his family or friends will often be invited to the naming, wedding or funeral of a Toda. The Badagas at these times eat Toda food provided it has been prepared in a separate pot.[14] Similarly Badagas may invite their Toda partners and friends to weddings, funerals and certain of the annual festivals, to most of which the Todas are required to bring some useful present. On these occasions the visiting Todas or Badagas should be fed, and it is also appropriate for the hosts to make small gifts; yet gift exchange is not requisite to all ceremonies.

The Toda, like the Kota, has an obligation to visit the married daughter of each Badaga partner once in a lifetime. He sends word of his intention; then comes and presents her with a buffalo heifer or perhaps something even more valuable. In return she gives him a cloak and possibly some other clothing.

Once a year each Badaga village holds a ceremony at which the cattle are given salty water. The Toda or Todas who are the associates of men in that village are invited on this occasion to take whatever salt is left over from the ceremony (Hockings, 1968c, 414).

All Todas from nearby hamlets are invited to attend the great memorial festival in which Badagas honour one generation of their dead; indeed it cannot take place without permission from some Todas of the neighbourhood. These local men bring cane to use in the catafalque and are offered Re. 1.25 in return. A Toda associated with the Badaga village may opt for the special duty of sitting at the major entrance and receiving each group of visitors. He asks every group if they include any important man—one carrying some administrative portfolio or a member of the gentry.[15] If there is such a man in the group the Toda tells them all to wait while he brings the commune headman to welcome them. Otherwise he conducts the visitors to the street where a great catafalque has been erected. The Toda is fed while he performs this service, and afterwards he gets a gift. Todas may have had a similar role during the funerals of the Badaga divisional headmen. Their main duty seems to have been policing the vast crowds that used to attend those ceremonies (Lütze, 1887, 14; see Plates 13–14).

As was mentioned earlier,

> At the present time [1902], the amount of grain supplied by the Badagas is not sufficient for the needs of the Todas, and both

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

The Kurumba watchman may still play a necessary role in the ritual of his Badaga commune; but Badagas have no part whatever in Kurumba ritual. The sowing and harvest festivals in which the Kurumba must participate are the two most important in the annual cycle. In the former he must make certain ritual utterances and cut the first furrows with a plough—today with a mere ploughshare—at an early morning ceremony in January, and then he must sow the first seeds. In the harvest festival, which falls in July, he must sacrifice a buffalo calf early one morning in a Badaga's field. Two days later he leads a procession of Badagas to their temple where he assists the priest with preparations for the ritual. Then two days after this he must make a wreath of millet sheaves, attach it to a stone archh (representing a temple gateway) and then reap the first grain of the harvest. Kurumbas now claim it was they who initially taught the ancient Badagas about these two ceremonies. During the memorial ceremony for a generation that has passed away, the commune Kurumba also has an active part. On the second day (a Monday) he brings a bamboo ladder to use in building the catafalque, and he also cuts the first bamboo pole to be used in this construction. On the following Sunday and Monday he sacrifices two goats. His role throughout all of these ceremonies is that of an accessory priest, and for this he receives some fifteen rupees (Ward, 1821, lxxvi; Birch, 1838, 103, 105; Francis, 1908, 154; Belli Gowder, 1923–1941, 13–15; Noble, 1976, 118–120).

Although he does not help at any other Badaga ceremonies it used to be considered a wise precaution to invite his attendance at any auspicious ceremony, such as a wedding or naming, and then make him some small gift that might help avert the ever-threatening Kurumba malice. For a Badaga funeral he might also receive a payment (Thurston, 1909, vol. I, 86–87), although Kurumba sorcery could not affect such an inauspicious ceremony.

There are certain situations in which Kurumba musicians play at a Badaga wedding or funeral in place of the Kota band (Grigg, 1880, 211). Traditionally it could happen either when a dispute had at least temporarily alienated a Badaga family from their Kota partner or when an epidemic was rampant in the Kota's village. Now, when most Badagas have stopped inviting Kotas to any of their ceremonies, some invite Kurumba musicians instead, while others dispense with the music altogether. If the Kurumba watchman is asked to arrange for a band of musicians his own

unknown antiquity).[25] This is controlled by Irula priests—who, unlike most South Indian tribals, are Vaishnavites. The two monoliths inside the stone circles represent the god Ranga and his wife, to whom some of the local Badagas make a yearly offering of plantains, milk and coconuts:

> The hereditary pújári is an Irula, and on the day fixed by the Badagas for the annual feast, he arrives from his hamlet . . ., bathes in a pool below the summit, and marches to the top shouting 'Góvinda! Góvinda!' The cry is taken up . . . and the whole crowd, which includes Badagas, Irulas and Kurumbas, surrounds the enclosures while the Irula priest invokes the deities by blowing his conch and beating his drum, and pours oblations over, and decorates with flowers, the two stones which represent them. That night two stone basins on the summit are filled with ghee [clarified butter] and lighted, and the glare is visible for miles around. The ceremonies close with prayers for good rain and fruitfulness among the flocks and herds, a wild dance by the Irula, and the boiling . . . of much rice in milk. (Francis, 1908, 340; compare Ward, 1821, lxii; Breeks, 1873, 70; Macleane, 1893, 373).

While Badaga contact with the Irulas was less frequent than with other tribes, one of the major 'sanskritizing' influences in the Nilgiris was clearly constituted by the Irulas until the latter part of the last century. As Metz observed (1864, 133), 'They come up now and then . . . and divert the inhabitants with obscene theatrical performances representing passages in the life of Krishna, whom they call Govinda'. The Abbé Dubois (1906, 196) pointed out how in the early 1800s Rangasa:mi Peak was a place of pilgrimage for Hindus from the plains, who 'have made it a *punyasthala*, or place of virtue . . . As it is very difficult to reach the top of this mountain, a view of the summit alone . . . is considered sufficient to remove the burden of sin . . . .' Those stalwart pilgrims who did clamber up the peak could hardly have failed to influence local Badagas to some extent in pre-British times.

For such services as their Krishna dramas and occasional medical therapy Irulas used to get grain from the Badagas, a gift which was probably in the nature of a *douceur*, for Irulas were also considered sorcerers (though less powerful than the true Kurumba). Some Badagas living close to Irulas probably had a more

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

177 (233) hundred buffaloes permanently in the Moyar Ditch under the charge of Kasuvas because of shortage of grazing around Be:ragani itself. The herdsmen are paid from temple funds.

177 • 716 As in the case of Kurumbas, Irulas and Uralis, a Kasuva band may perform at Badaga ceremonies in place of the customary Kota one. Aside from this, there is one annual ceremonial event which has brought the two communities together in considerable numbers over the past decade or so. This is a complex *pu:ja* to the goddess Sikkamma at her Kasuva-owned temple in the Moyar Ditch, held every March. Roughly five thousand Badagas and most Kasuvas attend, the highlights of the event being *pu:ja*, a free meal, and a noisy night-time procession with the goddess' image mounted on an electrically lit elephant.

BADAGAS AND URALIS

618 177 The Uralis are a tribe of gatherers and shifting cultivators who inhabit jungles on some southern slopes of the plateau. They have no regular connexion with Badagas, but as they are feared for their sorcery they can depend on alms from Badaga villagers should a crop failure force them to wander up onto the plateau, as it occasionally has. Under unusual circumstances Badagas may pay a band of Uralis to perform music at a ceremony when for some reason Kotas cannot be invited.

THE WAINAD GAUDAS AND THEIR NEIGHBOURS

621 (173) The Wainad Gaudas are Badagas who settled on the lower plateau some two centuries ago. In proximity to them are various other groups: Kotas, Chettis, Panias, Irulas, Kurumbas and until 1925 some Todas. The Gaudas, a dominant community in the area, cultivate dry and irrigated rice. They claim it was the desire for rice which had prompted their ancestors to move down into the Wainad from Badaga villages on the Nilgiri Plateau.

621 (162) (623) The community consists only of Gaudas, except one commune which also has some Toreas (now calling themselves Gaudas). The 951 people live in ten communes, each made up of a few hamlets containing one lineage. Every commune has a council, and for complex cases a council of all the Wainad communes is held at

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

MARKETING BEFORE 1825

Until the British encouraged sundry traders from the plains to establish a weekly bazaar in Ootacamund around the year 1825,[8] there was no market-place on the plateau itself, and coinage did not circulate much among Badagas. Nevertheless they did participate slightly in the market economy of the plains early in the last century. Depending on the position of their villages some went down the eastern slopes to the market of Ka:ramuḍu (in Tamil, Ka:ramaḍai), others chose a route down the northern slopes to the Mysore town of Guṇḍulupe:te and those in Kundena:ḍu went southward (as in Finicio's day) to Sundepatti, a small market in the westernmost corner of the Coimbatore Plain.[9] Apart from visiting Ka:ramuḍu (which they called Koṅgu, meaning 'plains') they never had any occasion to travel extensively on the Coimbatore Plain. Guṇḍulupe:te used simply to be called Pet: this meant 'a place where people gather together', hence a market; or according to some, 'a place where cattle gather'. For a long time it was a major cattle market in southern Mysore.

Early each March the Kanarese Chettis and other people of Ka:ramuḍu held a festival to honour the god Raṅgana:tan, after which there was a large cattle fair and general market.[10] A delegation of Badaga men from villages in the eastern part of the Nilgiris attended that festival every year.[11] They would first help drag the chariot of the deity and then would barter goods for coinage and whatever else they needed. There seems to have been no fixed date for the annual visit of more westerly villagers to Guṇḍulupe:te, but it coincided roughly with the Ka:ramuḍu expedition. In both cases the Badagas obtained provisions for their main harvest festival, the Great Festival,[12] which falls in March or April, and salt for the ceremonial feeding of their cattle in March. In Guṇḍulupe:te Lingayats could also buy personal *liṅgas* at the monastery. In view of the long walk from these markets and the 1500 m. ascent, it is not surprising that the items bought were small and fairly valuable.

All three trading expeditions were organized on the same principle. Permission to go was first obtained from the village headmen, then preliminary arrangements were made as to who would go and the time of their departure. The Badaga headmen would then send a message to neighbouring Kota headmen, thus giving Kotas an opportunity to join the party, for the Kotas did not

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AN50 Badaga AN50

other's rituals. This contrasts with the intensity of the relationships uniting the various peoples of the plateau (compare Diagram 8, p. 100).

We know of only two occasions when Chettis and Badagas do have some ritual interaction: one in the plains, the other on the hills. Perhaps two centuries ago, and certainly before British suzerainty in the area, the Chettis of Ka:ramuḍu, acknowledging that they were becoming wealthier because of trade with the Nilgiris, built a larger temple to their god Raṅgana:tan and started the annual chariot-dragging festival in his honour. It was this festival day that the Badagas always chose as the best time for their yearly trading expedition; the trading was preceded by mandatory participation in the ceremonies (Nicholson, 1898, 352; see above, p. 138).

Secondly, one of the major Badaga festivals, in honour of their goddess Hette ('grandmother'), is held in Be:ragaṇi village, where there is a special building called Weaving House belonging in common to the whole village. Several days before the annual festival their Regional Chetti comes up from near Sirumuge to sit in this house and weave a year's supply of new clothes for the priest. These are a loincloth, turban and shawl, all of cotton, for the making of which the Chetti gets a fixed amount of cash from the temple funds (Francis, 1908, 317). These men do not otherwise weave while touring the plateau.

NOTES

1. 'There are no manufactures on the hills and much less of trade'; an exaggeration from Keys, 1812, li; compare Hayavadana Rao, 1908, 108.
2. See above, p. 40, n. 9. It may be mentioned that both Ptolemy and the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* refer to a town called Nelkynda, but this was probably Nirkundram, near Kottayam in Kerala.
3. It connects with the most westerly part of the Coimbatore Plain, in the upper valley of the Bhavani, as well as with Malabar District; Hayavadana Rao, 1908, 105.
4. He did not ascend the hills but made his enquiry at the foot, on the Coimbatore side; Grigg, 1880, 277, Hayavadana Rao, 1908, 106, and Price, 1908, 2.
5. Burton, 1851, 270; Metz, 1864, 6; Balfour, 1885, 1099; Hayavadana Rao, 1908, 107, n. 1. Among these people was Colonel A. MacLeod who spent some months in military movements in the Wainad in 1804. Several Badaga boys born on the day of his visit were named MacLeod; see Metz, 1864, 6; Grigg, 1880, 312; Price, 1908, 10. Other early visitors included H. Bevan and L.G. Ford (1809), William Morrison (1812), and W. Keys and MacMahon (1812).
6. Keys, 1812, li; Sullivan, 1819, lv; Macpherson, 1820, lvii; Ward, 1821, lxiii.

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

000 lxv; De La Tour, 1822, 261; Baber, 1830, 315; Harkness, 1832, 136–137; Birch, 1838, 103; 'Stocqueler,' 1845, 579; Price, 1908, 8; Sarada Raju, 1941, 107–108. On the partition of the district, see Grigg, 1880, 290–291, 303, and Hayavadana Rao, 1908, 117. See also Hockings, 1973.

241 7. Botanical identifications for the species referred to in this study, here arranged alphabetically, are as follows: almonds *(Terminalia catappa)*, barley *(Hordeum hexastichon)*, betel or areca nut *(Areca catechu)*, black dammer or resin (from *Canarium strictum*), black gram *(Phaseolus mungo)*, chick pea or Bengal gram *(Cicer arietinum)*, coconut *(Cocos nucifera)*, coffee *(Coffea arabica)*, common millet *(Panicum miliaceum)*, coriander *(Coriandrum sativum)*, country bean *(Dolichos lablab)* fenugreek *(Trigonella foenum-graecum)*, field peas *(Pisum arvense)*, finger millet *(Eleusine coracana)*, flax *(Linum mysorense)*, garlic *(Allium sativum)*, gentian *(Gentiana pedicellata)*, gourd *(Lagenaria vulgaris)*, great millet *(Andropogon sorghum)*, Italian millet *(Setaria italica)*, Italian rye *(Lolium italicum)*, lime *(Citrus aurantifolia)*, mustard *(Brassica juncea)*, oats *(Avena sativa)*, onion *(Allium cepa)*, panic-seed *(Setaria pallidifusca)*, pepper *(Piper schmidtii)*, poppy *(Papaver somniferum)*, potato *(Solanum tuberosum)*, prince's feather *(Amarantus paniculatus)*, pumpkin *(Cucurbita pepo)*, rattan cane *(Calamus spp.)*, rose-mallow *(Hibiscus esculentus)*, sandalwood *(Santalum album)*, slender millet *(Panicum miliare)*, tea *(Camellia sinensis)*, tobacco *(Nicotiana tabacum)*, turmeric *(Curcuma longa)*, and wheat *(Triticum dicoccum)*.

000 8. Hayavadana Rao, 1908, 115. This area is now the playing field between the Lawley Institute and the Botanical Gardens.

9. Baikie, 1857, 25. In the mid-nineteenth century the Sundepatti and Manna:ru Passes provided a safe short-cut for smugglers between Coimbatore and Malabar; Ouchterlony, 1848, 75; Grigg, 1880, 19, 291.

10. Nicholson, 1898, 352. Note that the deity is a Vaishnavite one; its chariot-dragging festival is still held. See above, p. 145.

175 11. After crossing the Bhavani River in a rattan coracle covered with skins; Mackworth, 1823, 118–119; Grigg, 1880, 295. Once a market was opened in
366 Ootacamund Ka:ramuḍu ceased to have much importance for Badagas;
439 Francis, 1908, 340.

12. *doḍḍa habba;* on the salt ceremony, see Hockings, 1968c, *passim.*

●796 13. This fourteenth-century fortress, now submerged by the Bhavani Dam,
000 controlled the important Gajalaṭṭi Pass which links southern Mysore with the Coimbatore Plain; Nicholson, 1898, 425–427.

175 14. Ward erroneously calls the sum a dowry.

436 15. Later in quarter and one rupee denominations.

16. In the amounts of Rs. ¼, ½, 1, 3, 6, 12, 24 and 48; but see below, p. 172.

000 17. Also the case in some other districts of Madras Presidency; Buchanan, 1807, vol. II, 247; Grigg, 1880, 286, n. 1.

175 18. The years 1803–1805 were a period of drought in the Nilgiris; Grigg, 1880,
731 279, n. 2.

19. There were as yet no Moslem traders.

000 20. Cloth was not among the trade items. The Coonoor Pass was completed in
175 1833; Grigg, 1880, 17.

439 21. Shandy means 'market', from the Tamil *cantai.*

000 22. Foodstuffs were usually traded by volume rather than weight, for scales were
175 never used in or near the Nilgiris.
804

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

10

Religious and Social Change in the Twentieth Century

We have seen how some aspects of Badaga culture have undergone significant change, how the economy was monetized, how national systems of law and administration were adopted by Badagas and how a Christian community became a persisting feature of the social organization. We now examine what other religious changes have come about, what has happened to the Christians and how the society has adjusted to new patterns of communication, marriage and residence during the present century.

The process of modernization has brought about some changes in Badaga religion. Temples may nowadays have electric lighting, for example, although strictly electrical cable is a polluting material as it is covered with rubber, which conservative Badagas consider to be 'like leather'. Polluting anthropologists and other strangers, including government dignitaries, are now conducted into some of the temples. Another change has come with the new value placed on time: ceremonies that used to last for three days are now finished in one, those that ran for a week now last for only three days; and in general there is a short-cutting of the inessential elements of ritual. Some ceremonies show signs of dying out, so irrelevant have they become. The annual festival for Be:da Sa:mi ('Lord of the Hunt') is now rarely performed. The aid of this god was sought to protect the villagers and their fields from tigers and other wild animals (Metz, 1864, 67-68; Francis, 1908, 339-340; Emeneau, 1971, 5, 42, 564, 744): but today, with the increase in

[p. 213]

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

population, illegal hunting and poisoning of carnivors, and the great extension in the area of tea estates, predatory tigers and other large animals have become so rare on the plateau that there seems little need to propitiate Be:da Sa:mi.

Lingayats, over the past century at least, have taken up the worship of gods other than Shiva. The non-Lingayat Badagas have also adopted new gods, mostly Sanskritic deities related to Shiva, such as his sons Gaṇapati and Subramaṇia, and also Aiyappan. A parochialization of the great Hindu tradition is evinced in the temple established at Tu:raṭṭi for a stone brought there from Benares, or the silver image of Subramaṇia brought to a Ka:ṭe:ri temple from Benares, or the 'footprint of Ra:ma' on a rock at Mañjakombe.

BAJAN AND KRISHNA WORSHIP

These styles of worship are new to the Badagas, who are Shaivites (Krishna and Ra:ma are Vaishnavite deities) (Karl, 1945, 5). The performance of *bajan* (group hymns) began amongst them some thirty years ago, and so popular has it become that nearly every village has one or more sets of *bajan* instruments and holds a weekly performance of the sacred songs. These are hymns mostly in praise of the Lord Krishna; they are played on the instruments of Tamilnad, not of the Nilgiris, and the words are Tamil, not Badagu. Many villages have built a *bajan* house specifically for these devotional evenings; it is owned by the village in common and is considered a kind of temple. Inside are lithographic prints of Krishna and other gods and perhaps an image to which *pu:ja* is performed during the course of the devotions. Once a year donations are solicited from every household in the village for support of the *bajan* singing group. Not every villager is interested in this form of worship, but its popularity is clearly increasing, especially among the youths who regard it as a modern, urban form of worship. The rising interest in *bajan* has been noted elsewhere in South India (Singer, 1959, 148–149).

TAMILIAN AND KANARESE CELEBRATIONS

Heavy immigration to the hills, together with greatly improved communications with the plains to the north and east, especially

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

the frequent and cheap bus services, explain in part the proliferation of alien religious practices among Badagas during this century. Among the Wainad Gaudas there has been a comparable influence from Malabar to the west, an effect of heavy immigration from that direction.

Over the past fifty years a variety of memorial ceremonies has been instituted for the anniversaries of individual deaths; previously there had no been no such commemoration. A few corpses or their ashes have been buried at places beyond the village burial grounds, and stones have been raised to mark such spots or memorial statues erected. Here the closer relatives may perform an annual *pu:ja*; or they may do *pu:ja* at home before a photograph of the deceased. Some families invite more distant relatives to the ceremony; others do not but may distribute food to the indigent. Some have the ceremony in the daytime, others at night. Some will go straight to work after the *pu:ja*, others never work on that solemn day. In short, the scale and form of a memorial ceremony vary from family to family, but the general pattern reflects Tamilian influence.

As well as the new death ceremonies, several annual festivals have been adopted from the neighbouring plains people with varying degrees of enthusiasm and support. Over the past forty to sixty years Di:pa:vali, Ka:rttige and Ma:rgaźi have come from Tamilnad into many villages (just as the Ma:ri festival did a century ago), and Dassara, long the biggest celebration in Mysore City, has also been adopted; all of them in very attenuated form.[1]

Dipa:vali, the day on which the mythical Ra:ma was crowned after his return from Ceylon, is given very little importance. A minority of Badagas wear new dresses for the occasion but otherwise do not have so much as a *pu:ja* in honour of Ra:ma or Krishna.

Kartige extends over three days in November or December, but only the first day, dedicated to Shiva, assumes any importance. All the houses display lights throughout the night, and the priest does a *pu:ja* at the village temple, attended by most villagers. On the third day, dedicated to Vishnu, very few lights remain burning.

Dassara is also celebrated on a small scale compared with the major Badaga festivals at sowing- and harvest-time. It is universally supposed to last for ten days at the end of September, but only on the evening of the ninth do Badagas hold any celebration, and this a simple *pu:ja* to images or lithographs of gods that are kept in

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

the houses. On that occasion some Badagas also do *pu:ja* to bring blessings upon agricultural implements and even school books.

Ka:rttige is followed by the month of Ma:rgaźi (December-January), the most inauspicious month of the Dravidian calendar. Some Badagas have now adopted the Tamilian practice of daily *pu:ja* throughout the month. Early each morning a group of men goes along every village street singing *bajan* songs about Shiva and Vishnu. Before this daily tour the women clean the houses, put auspicious markings on the ground outside their doorways and leave the doors open with a lamp burning inside until the *bajan* group has passed by. The many villages which have adopted this ritual conclude the unlucky month with a big communal feast.

In short, we find that there is some local variation in the form taken by the borrowed memorial ceremonies and festivals. They are not celebrated by all Badagas and those who do so show less enthusiasm for them than for native Badaga festivals. Furthermore, Badagas are much less enthusiastic about them than are the Tamilians and Kanarese now living in the Nilgiris.

GROWTH OF LINGAYAT TIES WITH MYSORE

Before the twentieth century those Badagas who were Lingayats were mostly illiterate and knew little about their religion as it was practised in the Mysore homeland. Perhaps once or twice a year a Lingayat *guru* would wander up into the Nilgiris from nearby Angala or Nanjangud, selling *lingas* and performing family ceremonies (Harkness, 1832, 137); whatever he taught about the Lingayat faith would have been transmitted by word of mouth. In this century, in contrast, Badaga Lingayats are literate, and some are avid readers of books on Lingayat philosophy. Cheap bus transport has also enabled them to visit the Nanjangud temple and other places of pilgrimage easily and so to meet well-informed monks and priests in the towns of Mysore State.

One significant fruit of this increased contact has been a number of marriages between Badaga Lingayat men and Kanarese Lingayat girls; even a few of the conservative Wodeas have taken this step. However, the move for marital ties with Mysore has not found ready acceptance among most Badaga Lingayats, even though Kanarese brides usually bring a substantial dowry with them. For several decades this matter has been the subject

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

this mechanism, for it is illuminating. The crucial factor here is the re-evaluation process, for conversations contributing to it take place separately for the different phratries and factions and for males and females. Children furthermore are intellectually equipped for only a very peripheral part in adult discussion. Over a period of years rather different adaptations to living conditions therefore tend to be worked out by each phratry or faction, by men and by women, by the successive generations This accounts for the most obvious subcultural variations within the community; and because children naturally grow into adults and replace the older generation in most roles, an on-going process of changing cultural adaptations is in evidence even though the model for thinking about social relations has remained remarkably stable for some generations.

NOTES

1. Benbow, 1930, 39-42. Other Tamilian festivals now celebrated by some Badagas are Pongal, Ma:ri Habba, Rangana:tan car festival, and the birthdays of various gods; Stokes, 1882, 173.
2. B.E.M.S., 1867, no. 28, 70. It did range as high as Rs. 150 or 200; see Metz, 1864, 99, and Grigg, 1880, 222.
3. But 'varying from Rs. 10 to Rs. 200 . . .'; Natesa Sastri, 1892, 763; compare Tignous, 1911, 119, and Vivekanandam Pillai, 1937, 250.
4. Dowry may once have been a Badaga custom; Harkness, 1832, 41-42; Metz, 1864, 87. Even today Badagas should give their daughters upon marriage a present *(ado:li)* of at least one milking buffalo, one cow and one trained ploughing ox. If she is later divorced the gift is returned to her father.
5. The official claims that 'The vigilant working of the Prohibition department has made Prohibition a success in this district,' is farcical and is belied by lawcourt statistics; Madras, 1965, 23. It has merely provided a further concern for a burgeoning bureaucracy and another cottage industry for the landless. Most villages had at least one still in full-time production during the 1960s.
6. The great majority of people in the Presidency were not Brahmins and looked upon them as incursors from the north; yet 'In Madras the civil service and the professions were dominated almost completely by Brahmins . . .'; Béteille, 1969, 35, also 50-52, 164-168, 173-179.
7. Another village had three headmen recently when its anti-music faction divided into two groups over another matter; these two and the music faction each had a headman.
8. Tignous, 1911, 156; Illustrated Catholic Missions, 1916, vol. II, 8; Périé, 1933, *passim*. There had been some earlier Catholic conversions, the first in 1873 when Father J.M.J. Pottier had baptised a dying Badaga man in a village near Wellington. During the period 1892-1916 about a dozen families had been baptised by Fathers E.J.B. Foubert, M.-L. Robin, F.-F. Deniau, and J.-T. Gudin. Thereafter the pace of conversion increased.

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

177 178 796 By now the Badaga Christians were viewed as a separate caste, and the old antagonism over Christian conversion had given place to a new realism which accepted the British, tolerated their religion and sought to collaborate with them in the realms of commerce and administration. The periodic massacres of Kurumbas had also come to an end.

178 241 242 Land fragmentation and indebtedness continued to be problems for the twentieth-century farmer, but new techniques of commercial cultivation raised the per capita income appreciably. Chemical fertilizers and insecticides were now used, along with good seed and reputable tea cuttings. Money-lenders, middlemen and truckers all appeared on the scene to answer local needs. Most of the hillsides were terraced to permit efficient farming, and the emergence of co-operative societies from 1911 helped with this as well as with the more general problem of rural credit.

177 178 These new directions in the farm economy were fully in evidence by 1930, at which time most Badagas broke off their time-honoured exchange relationship with the Kotas, Todas and Kurumbas and began to seek the artifacts these tribesmen had made in town markets instead. The ostensible reasons for this break are several. Badagas usually mention the increasing cost of having a Kota band at their ceremonies; while Kotas mention an insulting article in a national newspaper of 1928, 'The Hindu', which implied that Kotas were descended from the unions of Todas with Badagas.[3] A glance at the population graph in Appendix 2, however, will make it clear that the over-riding reason for the break must have been the disproportionately large number [161] of Badagas. By 1931 there were 42,500 of them, too many to be adequately supplied in the customary way by a few hundred Todas and Kotas.

178 241 433 The Second World War brought a further surge in the demand for potatoes to feed the European troops stationed throughout south and southeast Asia; at the same time government financing helped the growers, with the result that this new capital and the high prices potatoes were fetching greatly alleviated the former indebtedness of Badagas. After 1957 potato production fell sharply with a series of disease-ridden crops, and tea, first planted by Badagas some thirty years before, now became a popular cash-crop too. By 1970 cabbage had also become an important crop.

511 Modern Badagas enjoy a high standard of living, occupy comfortable tiled houses, send their sons to college, make frequent

121 A ritual is not a network, but it is a medium of communication and provides an occasion for the personnel of all the networks of the village to converge in one place and act out their public roles. Ceremonial events are thus events of communication in two distinct senses. First, the confluence of people allows many local information networks to be reactivated; someone asks about getting a loan, another seeks opinions on a land dispute, a third takes a look at some potential brides. Second, the ritual itself conveys information to the participants. As we shall demonstrate, this message is a dramatization of the idea that the community is stable and its future assured.

231 (101) The Todas, Kotas, and Badagas, three communities on the Nilgiri Plateau[1] in Southern India, are all cattle-keepers. For the Todas buffalo herding is the major occupation; for the Badagas it is subsidiary to agriculture; and for the Kotas it is subsidiary to both agriculture and a variety of traditional handicrafts. Each of these groups now keeps cattle only for their milk products, though until several decades ago the Badagas and Kotas also used oxen for drawing their ploughs.[2] Each group gives salt to its herds once or more a year and each culture has a complex ceremonial for feeding the salt to the cattle.

121 (829) Confining ourselves to the Badagas,[3] we now ask a question that would in fact be equally pertinent to the case of the Todas or the Kotas: why is the giving of salt a day-long ceremony instead of merely a routine act of animal husbandry? Why are so many people and so much time involved in what a single boy could do in half an hour? The Badagas themselves would answer this question by invoking the "force of tradition"; but surely tradition is not *per se* an adequate explanation for the persistence of such a ceremony. The Badagas also maintain what is to them a perfectly rational (232) explanation for the act of giving salt to their cattle. After heavy rains the (824) young grass "tastes saltless," and the herds graze unenthusiastically; their owners make up this dietary deficiency by giving salt to the animals. The explanation suggests that these people understand something of the leaching process, but it certainly does not answer our original question: why has the act of salt-giving become a major annual ceremony?

231 ●796 Salt is regularly given to the cattle in March and at the end of December; in years when the grass is "saltless" a third dosage is given, generally in the month of June. On all three occasions the salt is given to the animals on a Monday, the weekly holiday of the Badagas, but it is only in March that the event is treated ceremonially.[4]

174 In the various writings abut the Badagas during the past 150 years there are only two brief references (Benbow 1928: 32-33; Karl 1945: 17), both fairly recent, to this salt-giving ceremony. Nevertheless it seems certain that the ceremony has a considerable antiquity; the comparable Toda ceremony was mentioned by Father Finicio in 1603 (Rivers 1906: 726). The

173 Badagas did not become literate until the present century, yet they have an extensive and generally credible body of orally transmitted history relating to their way of life in the days shortly before the British settled in the Nilgiri Hills (i.e., prior to 1820). These Badaga accounts are explicit about

3: Hockings E-5 (1962-1963) 1968
AW50 Badaga AW50

salt being one of the few items that the hill people used to carry up from market towns on the plains during their annual trading expeditions.[5] We may perhaps infer that the salt-giving was already a ceremony from the tradition that the men in these parties who were carrying salt specifically to give to their buffaloes were supposed to keep themselves in a ritually pure state, and were not allowed to carry any other trade items at the same time. One man would therefore carry salt for a number of men in the trading party, and they in turn would carry his purchases. Salt intended for domestic use was never treated with such reverence. Once a market had been established in the new British hill town of Ootacamund, *ca.* 1825, these old trading expeditions fell into abeyance because the Badagas could then purchase salt without having to leave the hills.[6]

The annual ceremony of giving "new-grass salt," called *'ka:ruppu*, is performed separately by each hamlet in March of every year, on the Monday that falls within the eight days following the new moon. At about the time of the new moon itself one man is selected from every household in each hamlet to represent that family; generally the head of the family assumes the role, unless the purificatory preparations are too burdensome for him.

Early in the morning of the ceremony, after the house has been purified, each of these men goes out to his cattle shed and brings in the salt he has purchased. This coarse salt is then powdered in a mortar inside the house with a special iron bar supplied by the Kota craftsmen.

At the appropriate time the hamlet headman comes along each street calling out, "Are you ready?" Each celebrant then picks up his powdered salt in its basket[7] and stands near the doorway. At a signal from the headman, the man who represents the Great House (i.e., that of the hamlet's founding family) is the first to leave his doorway. He goes and stands on the village green, and all of the other men selected immediately come out and line up behind him. They then start off for the stream where the salt-feeding will take place. The man from the Great House stays in the lead. At some distance behind this party of celebrants other members of their families follow, driving the cattle or just coming along to watch; but no women can be present.

This group goes to the bank of a stream near the hamlet, carrying their baskets of salt, iron rods, pots, and hoes. Near the stream the man from the Great House digs a shallow, round hole with his hoe, two to three feet wide and a foot deep. The other men then follow suit, each using his own hoe to dig a hole for his own cattle. During the present century, however, the Badaga cattle herds have become much smaller than before, and so only one man from each lineage is usually selected to dig a pit for all the cattle belonging to that lineage. (Generally a Badaga hamlet is made up of three or four lineages, one at least of which is recognized as having descended from the hamlet founder.) After each of these pits has been dug, the loose dirt in it is brushed out with a branch of the *'hubbe* plant.[8]

The sun is now in the east, for it is still morning. When the pits have been dug, the man from the Great House takes a handful of salt from his

3: Hockings, E-5 (1962-1963) 1968
AW50 Badaga AW50

basket and goes to the bank of the stream, facing toward the sun. In one hand he holds a pot. The rest of the men do likewise, taking care to stand downstream from the leader. Each has a handful of salt and a pot, and each wears a cotton shawl which leaves the entire right arm bare.

The leader (usually prompted in a whisper by some one else who knows it better) then pronounces the following prayer (pausing at the end of each line, whereupon the rest of the party repeats the last word in lieu of saying the entire line over):

O Lord [Swami], we today celebrate things as our
fathers, grandfathers and forefathers have done.
Old is not new, and new is not old [i.e., old things
are not neglected, nor new things added].
Whatever we sow, may it grow more than ninefold.
Whichever female cattle conceive, may they give us
plenty of milk.
Whatever we put on the threshing ground, may it not be
wasted [i.e., may all the grain reach the store
without mishap].
O God, may the cow or young buffalo be impregnated by
the male just after getting its second teeth.
Just before getting its fourth teeth, may its calf walk.
May the house be filled with children, and may the pen
be filled with cattle.
Let everything be good. *Hau hau!*

The prayer is uttered in this fashion three times. At the end of the second recital the men shout *"hau hau"* twice, and at the end of the third they shout it at least three times, in expression of their happiness.

As the final words of this prayer are uttered, each man stoops beside the stream, still with his salt in one hand and pot in the other. He mixes the salt in the running water and catches some of this saline solution in the pot.

The leader then takes his pot of brine and pours it into the pit that he dug. The other men follow suit. Then all the cows and oxen, but not the buffaloes, are driven to the pits to drink. When the animals have emptied a pit, more water is thrown in and further salt added without additional ceremony. Only after the cows and oxen wander away from these pits are the buffaloes finally allowed their drink of brine. A few of the men then refill their pots with water and pour it over the backs of the animals "to cool them."

When this phase of the proceedings is completed, each man fills his pot with water again and then sits down in the grass nearby. At this point one or two Todas, who have been waiting for this moment, come forward and approach each Badaga in turn. The Badagas give most of the salt remaining in their baskets to these Toda friends.

After this, one of the Badagas goes to a dewberry bush and cuts off a branch. This is regarded as a ritual, and is done with a small knife made by

3: Hockings E-5 (1962-1963) 1968
AWSO Badaga AWSO

Kotas especially for this purpose. Sprigs from the branch are distributed, and every man places a small sprig on top of the salt that remains in his basket. A branch is also cut from the hill gooseberry and distributed in exactly the same way.

The celebrants now return to their homes, again led by the man from the Great House. Other male members of each family may follow this party, driving the buffaloes and carrying the hoes. Each man in the ceremonial party, however, has to carry his own potful of water, his iron rod, and his basket (which now contains a little salt, the two twigs mentioned, and also a remaining piece of the *'hubbe* that has otherwise been used as a brush). As the men walk they chant *"hau hau,"* an expression of their happiness. When they reach the hamlet they shout *"ki:i:hi,"* which means, "It is finished." Then the party splits up. Each member goes to his calves and gives them a taste of the salty water he has brought back. After that he is ready to enter his house.

There is still more ritual to be performed, however, for the man must enter his house in a prescribed way. As he comes toward the entrance, the oldest woman in the family stands just inside the inner room, leaning out through its doorway in such a way that she can also see through the entrance to the house. As soon as she sees the man coming across the front yard, she asks him three times in succession, "Have all the cattle drunk salt well?" He answers "Yes" each time. During this interchange the man continues walking but his pace is measured so that he will not enter the house until he has said "Yes" for the third time. On reaching the doorway he is careful to step auspiciously across the threshold with the right foot first.

Once inside the house he stands the iron rod against the wall near the door, and then puts the basket of salt on top of the hole in the floor where grain is usually crushed and where the salt was powdered earlier. The woman then comes from the inner room, takes the three sprigs from this basket, and hangs them from the ceiling of the outer room. She carries the basket to the inner room, which is a kitchen and dining room, and she uses up whatever salt remains in cooking a meal. During the whole performance of the salt-giving ceremony she should use no other salt than this. (Nowadays she has generally finished cooking by the time the man returns home, and so just adds a pinch of his salt to the prepared meal.)

The meal which is served at this time to the members of the household differs from ordinary morning meals in certain respects. The man who has represented the family in the salt-giving ceremony is served before everyone else; ordinarily this would only occur when no other adult male members of the family were present. Furthermore, he is served in the outer room of the house, although meals are otherwise eaten in the inner room, where they are cooked. He eats butter first of all; the rice and vegetable curry follow. Afterwards he must wash his hands in cold water; usually he washes in hot.

During the afternoon each of the celebrants carries his pot of water to the cattle pen and there pours it on the ground. Again the man from the

3: Hockings E-5 (1962-1963) 1968
AN50 Badaga AN50

796 Great House precedes everyone else and afterwards announces for the 796 benefit of others that he has completed his duty. Only after the water has been poured into his cattle pen may anyone go beyond the hamlet boundaries.

796 During the rest of the day, however, no one may do any outdoor work, not even something as trivial as picking up firewood. The permitted 784 exceptions to this rule are that people may wash themselves and their clothes, and that the men may clean out their cattle sheds and prepare bedding for the cattle. Until recently a heavy fine was levied on anyone trying to do other kinds of work on this day.

771 This ceremony is generally considered by the Badagas to be one of the most important, or as some put it, "most sacred," in the entire calendar of [796] festivals. That it should be so may seem surprising, in view of the unimportant role that cattle now play in the economy of this culture. We might 121 expect that festivals celebrated at times of sowing or harvest would be the most significant for an agricultural community such as the Badagas. Yet the giving of salt is widely held to be quite as crucial as either the sowing or the harvest festival.

What, then, is it about giving salt to cattle that makes this event so essential to the festival calendar of this particular society? My answer would be that in the course of this ceremony a symbolic reference is made to all the roots of social stability and all the sources of the good life. Every society needs certain occasions when the bases of its organization and the ideals by which it lives are made visible to the members of that society. In this respect the Badagas are in no way unusual; the salt-giving is in fact a time when the whole community is busily engaged in acting out various roles which make the foundations of social life apparent to its members. Values which guide the community are thus paraded in the ceremony, a 121 display which helps preserve them from doubt and obscurement.

539 A person's requirements for attaining the good life are summarized in 782 the prayer which is spoken beside the stream. Here reference is made to maintaining long-established traditions, to having a plentiful harvest, to 796 a superfluity of milk, and to the birth of many calves and children. The final line, "Let everything be good!" underlines the intent of the whole ceremony.

121 The Badagas themselves do everything possible on this occasion to ensure that things will in reality become "good" for them. They show due def- 796 erence at every point to the living representative of their hamlet's founding family, who built the Great House and so started their community. They reward the Todas for their friendship and services. They pay brief respect to Ganga, the goddess who is represented in all streams and who controls rainfall. They pay respect to the sun, source of all light, by facing it before they stoop beside the stream. They show gratitude to the cattle, which are an important source of food and were formerly the indispensable laborers of every farmer. They ceremoniously gather specimens of two useful wild plants. Their route takes them to what have traditionally been the most sacred places in every Badaga hamlet: the Great House, the village green,

3: Hockings E-5 (1962-1963) 1968
AN50 Badaga AN50

121 the stream, the cattle shed, and the hearth. Furthermore, the participants in
•796 this ceremony do all they can to insure that they are in a state of purity,
and that they do nothing to cause a mishap during this particular day.

Let us now examine these points in more detail. The requirements of
783 ritual purity and bodily cleanliness are a *sine qua non* for the performance
of any ceremony. If a man does not approach the gods with the knowledge
that he has done all that he can to be in a pure state, he has little hope that
175 his prayers will be answered. In pre-British days, when the salt had to be
purchased in the plains below, it received special treatment from the mo-
437 ment of purchase onward to insure that it would not become polluted
439 before the ceremony. The men who were to carry the salt up the mountain
slopes were not to carry anything else; contact with ordinary foodstuffs
783 would pollute this particular salt. The annual trading expeditions were
normally timed so as to fall a few weeks before the salt-giving ceremony.
Nowadays a Badaga simply buys his own salt in the town market and
brings it home without special ritual precautions.

High in the roof of each cattle shed are shelves on which various dairy
231 articles are stored. The man who brings the salt home is supposed to take it
778 straight to the cattle shed and place it on one of these shelves; he must not
783 bring it directly into his house, even though he will later have to do so
when the ceremony is about to begin. It is felt that the salt would become
polluted in the house if it were brought into an unpurified room where
sexual activity has occurred. The cattle shed, though not considered a temple
like the Toda dairy, is a pure and sacred place because milk is stored
783 there. When the salt is finally brought into each purified house for powder-
ing, it is whisked around the mortar with the help of a freshly cut twig
796 of wild *'hubbe* (also used for loosening any salt that remains on the bottom
of the basket). The Badagas have two kinds of broom, one for indoor use
(824) and one for outside; but both are considered impure because of what they
have come in contact with, and so cannot be used for sweeping the salt
(412) around while it is being powdered. The used part of the *'hubbe* branch is
(783) thrown away after this, and the unused remainder is placed on top of the
salt. From the time of purchase onward, this salt is always carried in a
special basket kept only for this purpose.

It is not only the salt that must be kept in a ritually pure state; the
783 man selected to perform the ceremony on behalf of each household is also
under certain restrictions. From the day of the new moon until after the
salt has been given to the cattle this man must not shave, have sexual re-
lations, cut his finger or toe nails, or stay overnight anywhere other than
in his own home. By observing all these prohibitions he is believed to build
(765) up a state of personal purity. (Were a man to cut his hair and shave, it
would suggest he had recently attended a funeral and was still in the
inauspicious state of mourning for a deceased relative.) The culmination
of this spiritual preparation comes on the night preceding the ceremony,
when he must sleep alone on a sack on the earthen floor, wearing cotton
and without any other bedding.

(356) Early the following morning the house has to be purified too. After the

3: Hockings E-5 — (1962-1963) 1968
AW50 Badaga AW50

956 783 [239] womenfolk have bathed, they clean the house thoroughly, sprinkle the floor with fresh, semi-liquid cowdung (in Indian thinking, a purifier), and then bring a clean supply of water into the house in clean pots. Not until these preliminaries have been completed and the house can also be considered pure is the man allowed to go to the cattle shed and bring the new salt into his house for powdering.

783 796 By the time the representatives of each family are ready to leave their houses, therefore, they have done all that they possibly can to insure that their persons, their homes, and their salt are in a ritually pure condition. From this point onward there is no further attempt to increase their purity; instead the men lavish care on making no inauspicious slip in their movements.

796 [824] This is thought to be a joyful ceremony, and the acts done to promote an auspicious atmosphere are many. Strings of hill mango[9] leaves are hung over the doorways of the houses to indicate that an auspicious ceremony is in progress. As the men prepare to leave their houses with the salt, there are careful precautions to insure that the man from the Great [787] House is the first to step outside; it would be an ill-omened lack of deference should anyone else precede him. He goes and stands on the *'hattane*, the village green, but he is careful to face away from the houses. The other men to perform the ceremony then line up behind him; were the leader to look around it would indicate that he was faltering or turning back from the performance of an auspicious ceremony.

Thus when the man from the Great House feels that it is time to start off toward the stream with his followers, he cannot look behind, [787] but he asks if all of them have come. The reply that the men give must always be "Yes"; again, it would mean an ill-omened delay for them to answer otherwise. If the leader suspects that in fact the party is not yet ready to leave, he may pose his question in an indirect fashion, as for example, "We are proceeding." If some men have still to reach the green, the reply will be a half-assent such as, "You can if you want to." A negative answer should never be given. If everyone necessary is present, on the other hand, someone merely says "Yes."

It is important that nobody, even in casual conversation, use phrases such as "it is finished" or "it is completed," from the time they leave their houses until they return to the hamlet again. This too would be most inauspicious. The logic underlying the proscription, according to one old man, is that "we should not limit, finish, or complete our society."

While en route to the stream the party must never stop; nothing must block them in the performance of such a beneficial ceremony. Should they meet any other group of people, the latter must give way; and if the other group is going to an inauspicious ceremony such as a funeral they should hide out of sight of the salt-bearing party. (This is also true of the return home afterwards.) Throughout this journey the man from the Great House must remain in front of everyone else, and when they reach [596] the stream he must dig his pit first. Deference to him is expressed again

3: Hockings: E-5 (1962-1963) 1968
AWSO Badaga AWSO

796 when the men stand beside the stream, for it is important that he stand upstream of everyone else so that the water he uses will be purer than [576] that taken by the others (since it is untouched by their hands). While this ceremony is being performed it is also important that no one present, even a headman, wear a turban. The head of each participant must be bare in deference to the leader. When the men are ready to pour brine into the pits they must wait until the leader has done so. And when finally water is poured into their cattle pens the man from the Great House must again be the first to do so.

The prayer, led by this man, is spoken three times. When each participant returns home he is asked three times whether the cattle have drunk well; he answers three times in the affirmative; then a woman hangs up three sprigs from the ceiling. Badagas believe that performing any ritual act thrice makes it especially efficacious.

The foregoing acts, all aimed at insuring an auspicious atmosphere during the ceremony, are but a backdrop to the real business of the day: the expression of hope and gratitude to cattle, friends, and nature.

231 Man's indebtedness to his cattle is expressed on this occasion not only
796 by feeding them salt (which they are thought to enjoy); often when the cattle are being brought together in the hamlet before being taken to the salt pits they are washed and decked with garlands. After they have drunk their fill of brine it is believed that they feel intoxicated, and so the owners pour water over the backs of the animals to cool them. During the afternoon the only work men are permitted to do outside is to make the cattle sheds more comfortable by cleaning or repairing them.

796 Man's dependence upon wild plants is also given expression during this ceremony. We have already mentioned the use of *'hubbe* as a brush.
824 A part of it is also used for sweeping out loose dirt when the pits are dug. This used piece is thrown away, but a sprig of *'hubbe* is still kept on top of the salt and is later carried back to the house. Along with this *'hubbe*, sprigs of two thorn bushes are carried in the basket. When the man has entered his home, these three sprigs are hung from the ceiling. They indicate to the household that the ceremony has been completed without mishap, that the family has participated in the occasion, that the house has been purified, and that hopes for the future are bright. The value [262] of wild plants is also recalled at this time; both thorn bushes (the dewberry and the hill gooseberry) are a favorite source of sweet, edible fruits. In addition, the wood of the hill gooseberry is very strong, and in earlier [972] days served as material for walking-sticks. It still has an important religious role, as it is used for making ritual fire by friction. The axle in a Badaga's household grindstone is also made of this wood, and the buds and leaves of the hill gooseberry are used in a common medicine for constipation.

796 As the men walk home behind the man from the Great House they continuously chant *"hau hau," "e: hau hau," "ho: hau hau,"* or *"hau ko."* Every one of these interjections is an expression of happiness. Each participant is careful to enter his house with the right foot crossing the

3: Hockings E-5 (1962-1963) 1968
AW50 Badaga AW50

796 threshold first; to plant the left foot before the right would bring the ceremony to a most inauspicious end.

Even though the ceremony has concluded, the men who have performed in it take various precautions to insure that they retain their state of purity for the remainder of the day. The meal that they eat is a vegetarian [262] one; thus they avoid polluting themselves and their houses by having meat cooked on this occasion. To start the meal with butter is very auspicious, since eating butter is in Badaga thinking a sign of affluence and good luck. When the men have finished the meal they are careful to wash in [515] cold water—the prescribed means of washing whenever Badagas wish [783] to remain in a pure state. Afterwards they can clean and repair the cattle shed if they wish, for this is a meritorious act performed in a sacred place. Otherwise the only permitted activities are the cleaning of their clothes and of themselves.

Finally, we must consider the social relations which are given expression during the ceremony. The various sources of the community's welfare and of its power structure are reflected in the ceremony, albeit in symbolic reference. The family is represented usually by its male head, otherwise by a chosen male representative. The lineage is nowadays symbolized [621] in the common pit used by all the cattle of each lineage. The entire hamlet community is represented in concerted action by the party of men who come from every household in the hamlet, as well as by the man from the Great House who is the living descendant of the founding ancestor.

One curious element is the habit of feeding each celebrant afterwards in the outer, less sanctified, room of his house. Men regularly eat in the [264] inner room; the people who normally must eat in the outer room are the [562] women and all visitors from lower-status phratries of the Badaga com- [574] munity. It would seem that the man who gives salt to his cattle is confident of his own ritual purity and that of his entire house on this occasion. By eating in the outer room he suggests that status differences between men and women, and between his phratry and others, are of no importance provided ritual purity prevails. This attitude is also reflected in other aspects of [582] Badaga culture: people of higher and lower ranking clans intermarry, [615] both hypergamously and hypogamously, and members of lower ranking phratries sometimes participate in the temple rituals of higher phratries without polluting the temples.

562 Women are excluded altogether from the salt-giving ceremony, if only because there is a risk that the presence of a ritually unclean woman 796 might subvert the benefits looked for from God on this auspicious occasion. And yet the women do play a necessary "backstage" role in cleaning the house, decorating it, bringing in water, and cooking the meal. Segregation [621] of women from the ceremony underlines a basic fact of hamlet organization: the hamlet is exogamous, and hence all wives in it are "outsiders," members initially of other hamlets. Furthermore, women inherit neither land nor cattle. Symbolically the ceremony concludes an annual pact between the men and God for the fruitful blessing of crops, cattle, and children, all of which in Badaga law belong to men alone. Even so, the oldest woman

3: Hockings, E-5 (1962-1963) 1968
ANSO Badaga ANSO

in each family acts out the ritual of inquiring after the cattle when the salt-giver returns home. Her questioning of him, her standing inside the kitchen, her hanging up of the three sprigs, her cooking with the special salt, and her feeding of this man before the others constitute a reaffirmation of her household role: she must keep the house tidy, cook the meals, and be solicitous of the man's needs and interests.

The hamlet headman (who is normally one of the participants in the ceremony) yields precedence to the leader from the Great House on this occasion. The head of each Great House is a kind of priest, while the hamlet headman is essentially a secular official. The headman is responsible for whatever small arrangements are required in staging this ceremony. It is he who should send a message to the relevant Toda friends telling them when the ceremony will be held, and it is he who is responsible for deciding when to begin the procession out of the hamlet. Normally a headman may wear a turban at all times, but on this particular occasion he wears no turban, out of deference to the man from the Great House, the representative of the village's origin.

The Todas are bound to Badagas by a very complex system of exchanges (Rivers 1906). In the days before a Nilgiri market was opened, the Badaga salt-giving ceremony was the major source for salt needed by the Toda tribe. Today the gift of salt to Todas is still a recognition by Badagas of the help the Todas extend them in various matters connected with herding.

Kotas, unlike Todas, are considered a polluting tribe, and consequently the Badagas do not invite them to attend this auspicious ceremony. Yet the ties that link Badagas with Kotas are even closer than those with the Todas, and at every point in the ceremony the help of Kota craftsmen is evident. The iron bar (*'ha:re*) with which salt is powdered is made by Kotas particularly for this use; the iron rod (*'uppu'kol*) carried to the stream—which now serves no utilitarian purpose—is made by Kotas; the pot used in the ceremony was traditionally a Kota product although nowadays metal vessels from the market are often used instead; the small knife (*'uppu 'katti*) used in cutting the branches still comes from the Kotas; the hoe and any other tools used in digging the pits are made by Kotas; and the pot in which the meal is finally cooked was traditionally theirs as well. The cattle shed and pen would also have been constructed initially with Kota help. Today, consequent upon a rift in 1928 between the Kotas and most Badaga hamlets, there is much less insistence that Kota products be used in this ceremony, but up to that time such insistence was the rule.

In summary, the salt-giving ceremony is one in which each Badaga hamlet expresses its hope and expectations for the bounties that come in the form of cattle, harvest, children, the village society, wild Nilgiri vegetation, and relations with the Toda and Kota tribes. To have the maximum effect in promoting these benefits ceremonially, the participating men put themselves into a state of ritual purity and take great care that nothing inauspicious foil their purpose on this day.

We can explain the structure of the salt-giving ceremony by reference to certain principles underlying the structure of Badaga society. The per-

3: Hockings, E-5 (1962-1963) 1968
AW50 Badaga AW50

121
.796

formance of the ceremony every year has the effect of regularly parading these principles before the eyes of the community; symbolic reference is made to the virtues and the loci of ritual purity, the sources of material benefits, and the role of the various social groupings and relationships that are the essence of Badaga village life.

000

Early in this paper it was mentioned that the Todas and Kotas also give salt ceremonially to their buffaloes. Data on the Kota ceremony are not available but we will examine the Toda ceremony briefly to compare and contrast it with that of the Badagas.

Rivers (1906: 175-181), in his authoritative work on the Todas, describes certain salt-giving ceremonies, but he does not provide a description of the ordinary ceremony held in the Toda hamlets. I am deeply indebted to Professor Murray B. Emeneau for making available to me, prior to publication, his notes on a Toda song about the ceremony in question.[10]

The Todas give salt to their buffaloes five times a year (Rivers 1906: 175). One of these occasions is the ceremony of *ko:r up* ("new-grass salt"), celebrated some time between February and April, following the winter frosts, when there are occasional showers and new grass is beginning to grow. On a day shortly after the new moon, after salt has been obtained from the Badagas, the priest first cleanses the dairy-temple with buffalo dung and carries out his usual morning rituals. He then brings out of the dairy a stick, a basket of salt, and a milking vessel containing some of that morning's milk and a little buttermilk. He goes up to the chief buffalo and pours this milk three times from his hand into the animal's mouth, saying "*h5:*" each time. He then strikes this buffalo three times on its back with the stick.

After this, the priest puts the milking vessel back inside the dairy and goes off in search of hill mango bark. When he has got a supply of this bark,[11] he places three pieces in the stream at the point where the dairy herd is watered. He also puts three pieces of bark into the basket of salt that he has brought from the dairy-temple, and three other pieces into the milk. He has already, on the previous day, dug a round pit nearby to hold the salty water; into this he now deposits three more pieces of the bark. The priest next goes to the stream with a churning vessel. He fills this with water from the stream and puts salt and then bark into it. Rivers (1906: 176) notes that at each point where three pieces of bark are thrown (one after the other), the man utters the sound "Oñ" (i.e., "*h5:*") three times. The mixture of water, salt, and bark is poured into the pit. The chief buffalo and then the others in the herd are allowed to drink this; they are taken to the pit in groups of five or six, and if necessary the pit is filled with more salt and water but without adding more bark (Rivers 1906: 176).

When the buffaloes have finished drinking, the priest throws some grass three times into the pit, and also smears mud from the pit on his forehead. In this state he goes back inside the dairy-temple and brings out the buttermilk for the assembled men to drink. If any of them are in a state of pollution at this time because of a recent funeral in their particular clan, they are not allowed the buttermilk. Platefuls of puffed millet, a favorite

3: Hockings, E-5 (1962-1963) 1968
AN50 Badaga AN50

ceremonial delicacy, are also served to those who are not polluted (Rivers 1906: 368-369). There follows singing and dancing among the men, some of whom have come from other Toda hamlets for the event.

Rivers (1906: 177) comments briefly: "The object of this ceremony is said to be that the buffaloes shall give a plentiful supply of milk." Part of Emeneau's translation of a song (no. 14) expressed more clearly what is in the minds of the Todas during this ceremony (I quote five verses from it; the rest of the song describes the ceremony and its setting):

Tell the clouds to rise in the sky!
Tell the shade to fall densely!
Tell the beautiful season of showers: "Come!"
Tell the beautiful dews: "Fall!"
Tell the buffalo which has calved a year or more ago:
"Give milk that runs over the handle of the milking vessel!"
Tell the one ball of butter: "Be filtered overflowing the kīdy measure!"
Tell the barren woman: "Bear a child!"
Tell the barren buffalo: "Bear a calf!"
Tell all the sacred places: "Bless us!"
Tell all the gods: "Do charity!"

It will be noticed that the wishes expressed in this part of the song are almost identical with those we have recorded in the prayer of the Badagas.

Aside from the general intent of this ceremony, we can see that certain of its features parallel the Badaga institution. The priest is in a pure state, and he sprinkles buffalo dung on the floor of the dairy-temple before going out to perform the ceremony. The hole he has dug is of similar shape and size to the Badaga ones, and is located by a stream. Most of the ritual acts are performed three times; as Rivers (1906: 412-413) observes, three is an especially sacred number, and many ritual acts are performed three times. Bark from a wild plant considered highly sacred by the Todas is used in this ceremony as well as certain other rituals. In all these respects the ceremony is closely similar to the Badaga one: it is performed at the same time of year, and it bears a name cognate to the Badaga *'ka:ruppu*.

Yet there are also important differences. The Toda ceremony is performed by the priest alone, on behalf of his entire hamlet. In the Badaga institution, representatives of each family as well as their leaders take roles in it. In fact, it is characteristic of the Toda dairy rituals that only the man who has been sanctified as priest can perform them. As Rivers (1906: 244-245) says:

> The impurity of the ordinary man does not prevent him from visiting the dairies of the lower grade, but it prohibits him from taking any part whatever in the actual dairy operations. . . . He is perhaps regarded as unsanctified rather than impure.

The cattle shed, the green, and the home play no part in the Toda salt-giving ceremony; and the ceremonial food which is prepared by men and offered to the gathering does not include some of the priest's salt. Women, it is clear, do not play the "backstage" part in the Toda ceremony

3: Hockings E-5 (1962-1963) 1968
AW50 Badaga AW50

that they do in the Badaga one. This is in keeping with the Toda practice of keeping women altogether separate from anything that touches upon the herding of buffaloes and the rituals of the dairy-temple, for fear that they pollute the sacrosanct (Rivers 1906: 245).

For the Todas, this is a ceremony which makes reference to what is important in the man's religious life: the priest, the grades of purity, the dairy-temple, the various grades of buffalo, the stream water, and the highly sacred hill mango tree. It is only after the ceremony has been completed and men are singing and dancing that songs may refer, as we have seen, to the more secular blessings of Toda life: calves, rain showers, plentiful milk, and fertile women, as well as the hope for divine favors.

From the field work of Rivers and Emeneau it therefore appears that social groupings are not made visible in the Toda ceremony to the extent that they are in the comparable Badaga one. What is highly visible in the Toda ceremony, however, is an important principle of social differentiation: ceremonial purity. Only the priests are ceremonially pure; ordinary Toda men acting as onlookers lack this purity and so cannot perform dairy rituals. Some men are polluted by having recently attended funerals for fellow clansmen. Men who are so affected should mark the fact by tying their hair in a knot on the front of the head; they are not permitted to drink the buttermilk or eat the festive puffed millet that others who watch the salt-giving are offered.

Women, because of their lack of purity, do not attend any dairy ceremonies. In Badaga society, however, ritual purity, although a desired personal state, is not the important principle of social organization that it is for Todas and for Hindu castes living elsewhere in India; the Badagas emphasize seniority of status instead.

In both Toda and Badaga communities the salt-giving is treated as a sacred ritual rather than a routine act of cattle herding; in both there is some indication of what material blessings man hopes for, and in both ceremonies a major principle of social organization is made visible to participants. We may recall the generalization of Radcliffe-Brown (1958: 17): "In primitive societies any things that have important effects on the social life necessarily become the objects of ritual observances . . . , the function of such ritual being to express, and so to fix and perpetuate, the recognition of the social value of the objects to which it refers."

At the outset of this paper we juxtaposed the traditional communication media of ceremonialism and informal conversation with the new mass media of the press, film, radio, and the poster. It remains only to ask whether these new media have had any effect on the performance of annual rituals such as those we have been analyzing.

It is true that mass media have very much changed both the content of and the time devoted to informal conversations. Villagers now tend to spend less time in gossiping and yet discuss a wider variety of subjects than they used to. Conversation often amounts to a re-evaluation of accepted norms and farming methods which takes into account new information that has reached the villagers from the mass media.

3: Hockings E-5 (1962-1963) 1968
AW50 Badaga AW50

But no great change has come in salt-giving and the other important rituals of either the Badagas or the Todas. Indeed, only one general change is apparent in recent performances of the traditional ceremonies: they are done with a minimum of wasted time. Now that Badagas and even some Todas have become involved in the marketing economy, they have less time to spend idly, since time now means income. They tend to perform ritual acts with some haste, and they do not always feel concerned if a minor item in the ritual sequence is altogether omitted from a particular performance. Public opinion still favors as authentic a performance as possible, however, for the relationship between the continued performance of the rituals and the continuance of the social order is even today believed to be a real and crucial one.

Wallace's contention that rituals do not have an information function has, we hope, been qualified by this paper. The kind of information which a ritual such as salt-giving presents is information not available from any other source, whether mass media or traditional oral channels. Neither government nor gossip can reassure a community on the matter of its continued existence as a community; only the periodic re-enactment of roles and the reassertion of traditional values in the indigenous ceremonies of a culture can give Badagas, Todas, and other rural communities the security of knowing that their own particular way of life is both persistent and worthwhile.

NOTES

1. I am indebted to the American Institute of Indian Studies for a fellowship which enabled me to do field research there in 1962-63. The present paper has been written with the help of a grant from the Chancellor's Committee on International and Comparative Studies, University of California at Los Angeles. I am also grateful to M. N. Thesingh, a Badaga Lingayat who provided much of the material, and to John Hitchcock for his helpful criticism.

2. Terracing of slopes and the fragmentation of fields through divided inheritance have resulted, since the 1930s, in fields being too small to plough.

3. Numbering 85,463 persons in the 1961 Census.

4. During the past fifty years some hamlets have included the salt-giving ceremony in their sowing festival. This is convenient because it saves some time and expense on preparations; yet the two ceremonies remain quite distinct from one another.

5. Large groups of Badagas and Kotas used to go together to the market town of Gundlupet in southern Mysore, or to Karamadai, near Coimbatore. They carried hay, honey, opium, and clarified butter with them, and bartered these for salt, crude sugar, rice, coconut, tobacco, and trinkets.

6. Initially trade in the Ootacamund bazaar was handled through barter, but by about 1840 cash had become the general medium.

7. Called *'uppu kuk'ke*, "salt basket," this is made of cane by the Todas, stands about nine inches high (including the loop handle), and is smeared inside and out with cow dung.

8. The term *'šubbe* is used for six species of Leguminosae found at varying altitudes on the Nilgiri Hills. These are (1) the hill forest indigo; (2) the New Spain senna; (3) the tick trefoil; (4) the bell pea or Chinese pagoda tree; (5) *Dumasia villosa;* and (6) mountain downy senna.

9. Otherwise known as bastard mango or honeysweet tree.

41 Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

In the course of the year almost every village celebrates a dozen or so festivals, the most important of which are concerned with the agricultural cycle: *dodda habba*, the Great Festival, which marks the beginning of the agricultural year in November, and *de:va habba*, the God Festival, which celebrates the harvest in July. Another festival, called *Ma:ri habba*, intended to keep smallpox away, is celebrated in a few villages by fire-walking, when selected men walk unscathed across glowing embers. There are many other lesser ceremonies marking certain transitions in the lives of members of the community. For Badagas the major events of life are the naming of a child, its first haircut, the first milking of a cow, marriage, and death. On rare occasions some villages held a huge memorial ceremony in honour of a whole generation of the dead when its last member had passed away, but the ceremony was last performed in 1936. Yet many customs and celebrations of the Badagas are still observed today, in spite of dramatic changes which have affected other parts of their lives.

They are, for example, still led by a paramount chief whose position is hereditary and who always belongs to the village of Tu:ne:ri. (The latest chief was installed in 1977.) The political power devolves from this paramount chief to the headman of each village. In between them there are many local and regional headmen: several neighbouring villages make up a commune and, taking the name of the leading village, come under the authority of that village's headman. Above these there are also four regional chiefs who each control the villages and communes within their quarter of the Nilgiris.

Each headman has his own traditional council. A commune headman has the local village headmen in his council; a regional headman has the commune chiefs in his; and the paramount chief's council (which rarely meets) is composed of all the Badaga headmen. The judicial authority of all of these councils has been much diminished by the gradual imposition of Indian law and lawcourts. The traditional legal procedure for any dispute begins at the village level and then ascends through the various councils until finally an appeal may be considered by the paramount chief. In the past, headmen could impose severe punishments which ranged from ostracism to hanging, but today all criminal offences come under the authority of lawcourts, and village headmen and councils are left to deal only with minor disputes and ceremonial duties.

The Badagas are divided socially into a number of hierarchical

41 Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

have been found a therapist takes cold water fresh from the spring, and adds to it three pieces of Bermuda grass and three dead-nettle flowers. This water along with its contents is sprinkled thrice over the child's head and nude body. The procedure is repeated on the fifth, seventh and ninth days after the spots were noticed, but using the same number of pieces of grass and of dead-nettle as there have been days since the apparent onset of the illness. By the ninth day the child usually feels better, but "in one case out of ten" this same procedure has to be followed for the final time on the eleventh day, using 11 flowers and 11 pieces of grass.

After the final treatment the child's body is washed for the first time since the infection was recognized. The bath-water needs to be at body temperature, but if it turns out to be too hot the parent must wait for it to cool and may not on this occasion add cold water to cool it. To this particular bath some turmeric and a nim leaf are added. When the water is ready it is poured over the child's head and body, but the parents do not rub him, wash him with soap, or even touch him. He is not dried with a towel, but made to sit in the house covered with a cloth while incense, turmeric and the dry outer skins of garlic and red onion are burnt together under the cloth. The child sits in this smoke for a minute or two, and only after doing so can he use woollen clothes again.

VARIOLA (*doḍḍamma*)

7.3. Probably no epidemic disease has been commoner or more feared among the Badagas than smallpox (Ouchterlony 1868: 65). In response to it they have developed a method of quarantine that certainly does much to restrict its spread.

The disease is caused by a visitation of the goddess Mariamma. To prevent her coming most Badaga villages celebrate an annual festival in her honour. At one well-known such festival at the temple site of Bokkapu:r chickens, goats and sheep

41 Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

were sacrificed by beheading directly in front of the Ma:riamma temple. Two features of this ceremony are of interest: one is that the soil was ploughed at that point so that the blood of the victims flowed into the earth; the other is that a curtain was drawn in front of the image of Ma:riamma while the beheadings took place, lest the sight of all the blood should so arouse her thirst that she would go on the rampage through some villages, seeking the death of her human victims. A few years ago the animal sacrifices ceased. The symbolism suggests that Ma:riamma is a type of Hindu earth mother concerned as much with the fertility of the soil as with the control of disease: its control is obviously linked to the conservation of agricultural labour, from an ecological viewpoint.

If a person gets smallpox it means that he has done something impure. For this reason a therapist must pray to Ma:riamma for forgiveness of the patient's sins. The goddess is thereby pleased, not offended, if the patient recovers; yet if she is very angry she may still cause further deaths.

For a very long time the Badagas have relied on inoculations against smallpox. Probably the first person to administer these was the German missionary G.H. Weigle, who in 1846 vaccinated about 700 Badagas, "as a result of which a whole village gave him false names, for fear of magic" (Basel Mission 1846: 48-49; Eppler 1900: 79). This represented a remarkable change of attitude, for the situation up to that time was that, "...many refuse to take any remedies themselves, or to allow any to be administered to their relations, and thence arises their antipathy to vaccination. The supposition is not as to the nature or inefficiency of the means, but it is the fear of offending the goddess..."(Harkness 1832: 117, note). There is some evidence that the large-scale festivities in honour of Ma:riamma were adopted by the Badagas only towards the middle of the nineteenth century,

41 Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

751
796
796
784

a dating which raises the interesting question of whether this worship was intended to soften her anger at the effectiveness of the newly-introduced "European" vaccinations (Stokes 1882: 173).

753
164

It is believed that one infected person can infect many others, and yet Badagas feel that if someone from *beyond* the hamlet has seen an infected person before a neighbour in his *own* hamlet does so, the latter person is that much safer from attack. It is as though some of the danger has been carried off. A person may be infected by smallpox at any age, and he then retires to bed, while the remainder of the population leave the hamlet altogether. Someone of the same sex as the patient, and who has already had the disease, stays to attend him. This person need not be a therapist, but is advised by a therapist. It is believed that anyone who has already had smallpox cannot transmit the disease from an infected person to someone else unless he does it by giving the patient's clothing to somebody. This is quite unlikely to happen since other villagers are not in contact with him at the time. When a patient dies, all the people looking after other smallpox patients in that hamlet help bury the corpse. While it is permissible for other men to dig the graves, they keep well away when infected corpses are brought for burial. It is believed (and perhaps justifiably) that if they were cremated, the smoke could spread the disease.

164
758

164
753

766

(753)

Smallpox gives the patient more trouble with itching than do any of the other "sister" diseases, and so he lies on big plantain leaves since these give a cool sensation. He is given a diet of nothing but "cooling" foods, with very little salt. All of the rules and prohibitions adopted during the treatment of chicken-pox also apply to the people caring for patients with smallpox: thus the house must be kept pure, men must not smoke there, sexual relations must not occur, and no oily substances may be used in cooking. Anyone, whether

758

758
784

4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

day or two before the healthy villagers return home all those who have been suffering from smallpox and have stayed in the hamlet leave it early in the morning, and stay in the jungle for a day or two themselves; nowadays they go to a town instead. By leaving early, nobody else runs the risk of setting eyes on them. They must go beyond the hamlet boundary; the intention of this being that if any smallpox remains with them somebody of a different hamlet may catch it. They return home on the evening after the rest of the inhabitants have returned, so that the latter can find a deserted hamlet at the time of their re-entry.

When this day comes the men and boys gather together their cattle and drive them into the hamlet; the implication being that it is no longer a settlement but a grazing ground. The people follow the cattle, shouting "*hau hau*" ("*Hooray!*" a ceremonial cry of jubilation), then gather up the dry thorn bushes on the work-yards and burn them. Along the front of each Badaga house is a line of flat stones set into the work-yard and projecting about a foot from the house wall. These are called *ucce gare* (lit. "urine slab"), since in the old days people could bathe or urinate on them at night without fully leaving the house and so exposing themselves to the witchcraft of Kurumbas. On returning to the hamlet somebody from each household gets a crowbar, raises one of these slabs out of the ground, and then replaces it. This brief act symbolizes building the house anew.

It is only after 19 days have passed since this ceremonial re-entry that a person from a recently evacuated hamlet can either visit another or receive visitors from one: 19 days, because 18 days is said to be the maximum period between a new moon and a full one, or *vice versa*. Followihg the eighteenth day after the hamlet re-entry a communal funeral is held for all the people who have died during the smallpox epidemic. This is done with

632 (615) When a festival has to be organized that only concerns perhaps one of the phratries resident in a "village", the relevant hamlets call together their own multi-hamlet committee to handle the matter without calling upon the "village" headman to organize the celebration. It is only for festivals that concern nearly all of the hamlets that he will take charge of the organization. No festivals are celebrated 619 •796 jointly by a division, or by the whole Nilgiri population, largely because the distances to be traveled are too great and the number of participants would be unmanageably large. Funerals are always treated as public ceremonies, and weddings quite 796 often are. Other life-cycle ceremonies can be treated as public ones, but very (621) rarely are. In any case, when a life-cycle ceremony is treated as a public celebration, it is only celebrated in the hamlet of the people most closely concerned. Personal ceremonies are not celebrated at the "village" or any higher level. (This does not of course preclude inviting visitors from other "villagers" or divisions.)

623 (622) The headman does not make the arrangements for these various celebrations of his own accord. His hamlet generally has a council for settling disputes, and also a festival committee consisting of the priests and a few elderly men. The latter not only organize festivals, but occasionally may plan to build a new temple or propitiate an uncooperative deity. (Arrangements for life-cycle ceremonies, unlike public festivals, are mainly in the hands of the family concerned.) The elders on the hamlet council are generally different individuals than those on the (428) festival committee; this is a convenient division of the labor involved. But in either (562) case the positions are quite often hereditary, and are never held by women. The (888) elders are typically the older males of all lineages represented in a hamlet; it is they who are in the best position to enforce council decisions among all of their

177 are Tamil, not Badagu. Very many of the Badaga hamlets have built a bhajan house
533 specifically for use during evenings of devotion. Such houses are owned by the ham-
368 let in common and are considered as temples. Inside the bhajan house will be a num-
423 ber of lithographic prints of Kriśna and other gods, and perhaps an image. During
718 the course of a devotional evening, puja will be done to the image or to some of the
782 lithographs. Not everyone in a hamlet is interested in the bhajan form of worship,
178 however; but its popularity is clearly increasing, for it has its strongest following
•796 among the village youths. Once a year small donations are offered for the support
(431) of the bhajan group by every household in the hamlet where it is performed. An in-
creasing interest in bhajans has been noted elsewhere in South India (cf. Singer 1959:
148-49).

177 2) Lingayats, too, have developed their ties with the
795 plains. Before this century they knew little about the Vīraśaiva religion in their
Mysore home-land. Perhaps once a year a Lingayat guru would wander up into the
Nilgiris from Nanjangud (so says Harkness 1832: 137); but whatever he might be able
to teach about the Lingayat faith would have to be transmitted entirely by word of
mouth. In the 20th Century, on the other hand, the Badaga Lingayats have become
literate, and some of them read books on Lingayat philosophy quite avidly. Cheap
transportation has also enabled them to make pilgrimages to some of the places that
are sacred in Vīraśaiva belief, and to meet well-informed monks and jangamas in
the towns of Mysore State.

One significant fruit of this increased contact has been the occurrence of a
177 number of marriages, during the present century, between Badaga Lingayat men and
582 Kanarese Lingayat girls; even a few of the conservative Wodeyas have taken this
(578) step. The move for marital links with Mysore has not been met with equanimity by

177 many Badaga Lingayats, however: indeed, this matter has been the subject of a
582 bitter factional dispute within the Lingayat part of the Badaga community for several
578 decades. Many Badagas feel that, as people from even the lowest castes can be converted to Vīraśaivism (though they seldom are), there is a danger that the girls from Mysore are really descendants of Untouchables converted to the faith. For Badagas this is no easy pill to swallow.

177 **3) Many Tamilian and Kanarese celebrations are being**
796 **adopted.** An important effect of the greatly improved communications with the plains to the north and east has been the appearance in many Badaga hamlets of non-Badaga religious practices that have undoubtedly been borrowed during the present century.

769 During the past 30 years, for example, a variety of memorial ceremonies
(177) have been instituted by Badagas for the anniversaries of deaths within the family; prior to this time there had been no such memorial ceremonies. Some families now do a puja in the house, before a photograph of the deceased. A few people have been buried -- or their ashes buried -- at places other than the village burial grounds, and stones have been erected to mark such spots: here the near relatives may perform an annual puja. Some families invite the more distant relatives to the annual ceremony; others do not do this, but distribute food to the poor. Some do the ceremony at daytime, others at night. Some will go straight to work after the puja is over, others will not work at all on that day. The scale and form of a memorial ceremony varies from family to family, it would seem.

177 It is not only new death ceremonies that have recently been introduced, how-
796 ever. Various annual festivals have been adopted, with varying degrees of enthusiasm and support, by many of the hamlets.

177 For the past 40 years Dipāvali, and for the past 20 Kārtige, have been
•796 celebrated in many Badaga hamlets. Both are annual festivals adopted from the culture of the Tamilnād plains. Dassara, which has always been the biggest annual celebration in Mysore City, has also been celebrated by Badagas for the past 25 years. All of these festivals are celebrated in a very attenuated form in the Badaga hamlets.
796 Dipāvali, the day on which Kriśna destroyed the demon Narakasura, is given little importance by the Badagas, for they perform no rituals at this time. A minority of the people wear new dresses on this date; but otherwise they do not perform so much as a puja in Kriśna's honor. Kārtige extends over two days in November or December, but only the first of these, dedicated to Śiva, assumes any importance. All the houses carry lights on that day and throughout the following night; but on the second day, dedicated to Viśnu, very few lights remain burning. During the first evening the village priest does a puja in the temple, and most of the villagers attend this ceremony. Dassara, like Kārtige and Dipāvali, is celebrated on a small scale when compared with the main indigenous Badaga festivals (at sowing and harvest-time)
(782) (cf. Karl 1945: 12-20). Although Dassara is universally supposed to last for ten days, it is only on the evening of the ninth that the Badagas do any kind of celebration, and this is a simple puja done to images or lithographs of gods that are kept in the houses. Some Badagas do an additional puja on this occasion to bring blessings upon agricultural implements, and even on school books.

Kārtige is followed by the month of Mārgaṭi (December to January), which
177 is the most inauspicious month in the Dravidian calendar. During the past 30 or 40
788 years, therefore, some Badagas have adopted the Tamilian practice of doing a puja
788 every day of that month. Early each morning a group of men goes along every street
(956) of their hamlet singing bhajan songs about the gods Śiva and Viśnu. Before the daily

788 tour of the singers, the women clean out the houses, place auspicious markings
[356] outside the doorways, and leave the doors open with a lamp burning inside until the
[796] bhajan group has passed by. Many hamlets have adopted this practice. They conclude the unlucky month by holding a big communal feast attended by the entire hamlet.

In summary, whether we consider the organization of Kārtige, Mārgaṭi, Dipāvali or Dassara, we find that the borrowed festival is not celebrated by the 177 entire Badaga population, there is some local variation in the way in which it is cele- 184 brated, those who do celebrate the festival still show much less enthusiasm for it 796 than for native Badaga festivals; and finally, Badagas show much less enthusiasm for these festivals than do the Tamilians and Mysoreans now living in the Nilgiris.

796 4) Since 1913 important developments have occurred in the Badaga Christian community. From the earliest years of the present
[564] century, according to the missionary reports, the Christian community has been recognized by the Badagas as a distinct caste inferior to Hindu Badagas but superior to Kotas, and rigid patterns for interaction between the Christians and Hindus have been formalized. During the period 1913-1947 the Hindu Badagas, like the Christians 177 before them, became increasingly dependent on the economy and the labor market 648 which was ultimately controlled by the British. As a result of this the former acts 798 of violence toward Badaga Christians ceased; as many Hindu Badagas now found it desirable to maintain outwardly friendly attitudes towards the British, they could not simultaneously be openly antagonistic toward the religion of the British.

After the Christians had become a separate social group, Roman Catholic 186 priests became active -- mainly in converting Protestant Badagas -- and thereby 518 split the Christians into two culturally very similar but structurally opposed groups, 797 each maintaining a self-righteous and antagonistic attitude not only toward the other 798

234 pasture on neighboring slopes, and processes milk into clarified
778 butter. This, as the sacred clarified butter of the Badagas, is used
(793) in lamps within the dairy-temple and for ritual at Badaga festivals
or temples. Any Badaga male may visit the Bergani dairy-temple and
(237) drink buttermilk given to him by the priest. Because women are pollut-
(372) ing, no woman may enter the dairy-temple complex itself. However,
(262) women of nearby Bergani hamlet come daily to an established point at
(562) an uncontaminating distance from the dairy-temple and there receive
(783) buttermilk for household consumption. Buttermilk from processed
sacred milk is also drunk by the priest. The priest never eats meat
793 while in office and cooks his own vegetarian food. All grains, vege-
(262) tables, and other foodstuffs needed by him are supplied by visitors
(431) or neighboring Bergani Badagas.

The festival honoring Masthi Hethai takes place on a Monday in
• 796 mid-January. Badaga males from all over the Nilgiris come with their
(788) Hethai sticks to worship the goddess (Plate III, B). Women may also
(562) attend, but must remain an uncontaminating distance away from sacred
(293) places. Men and women wear new white clothing, must not bring any-
(262) thing made with leather, and eat no meat during the festival. At the
(784) festival's climax, two entranced priests believed to be possessed by
(793) Masthi Hethai predict crop yields in the coming main crop season
(241) (karbokam) and inform a few men that their wives will shortly conceive.
(842) Daily and festival rituals at Bergani are thus parts of a fertility
cult related to the Badaga's economy and future prosperity.

234 361 Badaga hundis. The Badagas have for a long time used seasonal

241 with mixed plants are also maintained, but these gardens may be miles away from their owners' houses and on outer Nilgiri slopes. Because
423 land is divided equally among sons upon a father's death, extensive
428 land fragmentation has taken place. To prevent further fragmentation, there is now a tendency for sons to share and jointly manage land.
311 Communal pastures are close enough to permit the keeping of livestock
361 in communities. Individually owned and communal plots covered with
245 acacia, eucalyptus, and temperate fruit trees now occur near Badaga
137 communities. Due to intensive or slowly continued tempera-- forest
318 clearance, only a few small remnant patches of natural fore main on the slopes near many hamlets and villages.

The outstanding features of Badaga hamlets and villages are the
361 house-rows with compacted earth courtyards edged by low walls (Figure
351 17). House rows within a single community usually parallel each other and are frequently aligned in an easterly-westerly direction, but on
361 flatter terrain they may surround a courtyard on two sides. Because
364 the Badagas consider it sinful to throw waste water toward the sun,
783 Lord Shiva's emblem, through alignment of houses in an easterly-westerly direction housewives may throw waste water through the back door or over the front courtyard wall without throwing it toward the sun.
841 One dwelling within a community house-row is set apart as a confinement place for menstruating women or women undergoing a postnatal pollution
368 period. In addition to dwellings, house-like temples are built into
243 house-rows. Grain is threshed and agricultural produce or firewood is
313 dried on the courtyards. These also serve as playgrounds for children,
857 as sites for performance of ceremonial rites, and as dance arenas
796
535

TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 231

857 during festive occasions. Badaga women frequently, sometimes daily,
796 wash over sections fronting their houses with cowdung solution to keep
535 the courtyards flattened out and cleansed. Low earthen or stone walls
956 edging courtyards define property limits and add to the privacy of
house inhabitants living within house-rows immediately below. Badaga
351 women sometimes store firewood or keep flower gardens on the wall tops,
but they are usually grass covered.

Separate shrines and temples stand in communities or on grassy
968 plots outside. Some Badagas own storage huts where agricultural
implements, fertilizer, seed-potatoes, and agricultural produce are
366 stored. Small coffee, tea, and supply shops are increasing in number
within Badaga villages. Hot beverages, as well as hotmeats, sweetmeats,
rice, and curry, are served in the coffee and tea shops. From supply
shops are obtained cigarettes, matches, grains, pulses, and vegetables.
Areca nut, betel leaf, lime, and perhaps tobacco, which are combined
and chewed, are also sold. Blacksmiths, building and supply contrac-
tors, carpenters, jewellers, and other entrepreneurs have established
968 businesses in Badaga villages. A single government office, or combin-
ation of offices such as panchayat, police, post, and telegraph offices
may also be present. Church or government schools are now located in
or near many communities.

Hamlets and villages still have circular cattle-pens built in
231 natural depressions or enclosed with stone walls, but cattle-hut con-
[361] struction is slowly leading to abandonment of the pens. Goats and
sheep are kept at night on raised platforms within goat- and sheep-
(654) huts. Monetary inducements offered by the Madras Government have

243 may be removed through hand threshing by women with threshing-sticks.
251 Finger millet is dried in the sun until individual grains crack when crushed between one's teeth. It is stored away after winnowing and may be kept for years without spoiling. Underground storage pits for finger millet are no longer in general use. After barley and wheat heads are removed, they are dried in the sun. Women, working on courtyards, use threshing-sticks to thresh the grain. Following further sun-drying and winnowing, grain is ready for storage.

231 (175) Livestock. From the early 1800s Badagas have reared chickens, buffaloes, cattle, goats, and sheep (Keys 1812: 11; Birch 1838: 103-105). They never keep pigs, and chickens are not commonly reared.
262 Because of close ties between bulls and Lord Shiva, the Saivite Badagas are not beef eaters. Mutton is eaten more than any other meat, so
234 goats and sheep are kept as a meat supply. Milk processing into curds,
462 butter, buttermilk, and clarified butter had been carried out by men in the sacred hagotus within houses. Only one to a few families in
231 each community now own livestock, and sometimes a single male within a family will take care of the livestock. There are a few families which
231 depend almost entirely on sale of mutton, milk, and milk products for
434 a livelihood. Most, however, use livestock as a supplementary income source, or to obtain meat and milk for home consumption.

231 Religious ties between Badagas and their buffaloes or cattle,
771 as demonstrated at Bergani, are also present in communities. Monday,
•796 Lord Shiva's day and a holiday, is a day sacred to the herd. In former times oxen were not worked and cows were not milked on this

231 771 796 [351]

day, but only the most devout follow this practice now (Harkness 1832: 114-115). In January, shortly before goddess Masthi Hethai is honored at Bergani, the Badagas celebrate Martu Pongal. Courtyards fronting houses are swept and freshly cowdunged. Women and children then decorate the courtyards with kitchen ash or powdered lime (Plate X, E). Before each house a square with diagonal lines is outlined. After the decorations have been completed, a priest leads a cow through the village from house to house. When the cow stops at each house, it is fed a flatcake made with millet, rice, or wheat and served on a platter placed in the center of the above-mentioned square (Plate X, F). Household women bow to the ground as the cow eats. After it has eaten and had its mouth washed off, the cow is led to the next house. Some time later a calf led around in the same fashion receives similar treatment at each house. Finally, community families feast upon flatcakes served with sugar or curry.

174 241 796 [174]

Hunting. Although writers have not referred to the Badagas as hunters, there is some evidence that they were. Past practices are probably preserved in more recent ritual. Among other acts connected with the opening of the main agricultural season at Melur, Francis (1908: 339) recorded that a hunting net was laid before a Badaga priest. After the priest had prayed for a favorable agricultural season, a pretense was made of spearing two fowls which had been thrown into the net, and it was then placed across a game path. A wild animal (sambar deer, if possible) driven into the net was slain, and Badagas divided its carcass among themselves. In July, 1963, a few Badaga men

174 224

795 If more than one have to receive the *Linga* on the same day each of them has to undergo this ceremony. After the ceremony is [793] over the priest returns to his village with the rice, &c., and fees. [796] Every house in which a boy has received the *Linga* has to give a grand feast that day. Even the poorest Badaga must feed five other Badagas at least.

Thus closes the Linga-wearing ceremony of the Badaga boy, after which he passes through no additional ceremony. He spends his time now in milking the buffaloes, now in the fields, and is thus always preparing himself to become in the future the responsible head of a Badaga family.

121 Before we speak of the ceremonies connected with the courtship and marriage of a Badaga youth and of those which are due to him at the time of and after his death, which we shall dwell upon at their proper place, we shall turn our attention to a Badaga female-child and trace her from her birth to her marriage. As soon as a female-584 child is born, some of her relations who are in a position to contract a marriage relationship bespeak the baby, and arrange for her to be married at the proper age to such and such a boy. In consideration of this they give Rs. 10 as a fee. This is everything to the girl and her price cannot afterwards be enhanced even though when she grows up she may be worth more—even as much as Rs. 200 which is the highest rate prevailing among them. Even when a girl is thus bespoken, all the forms connected with the courtship and marriage which I am about to describe are observed except the one of handing over the price of the girl, which in such a case has already been paid. This custom of contracting relationship is rare but it does occur in [684] ten out of a hundred cases. Violations of this kind of marriage are considered very ungentlemanly but they are not infrequent. The fine for such violations is after all very light, being merely the return of the Rs. 10 formerly paid for the girl when the infant was bespoken.

561 Let us now go back to the baby and suppose her not to be thus 852 bespoken. She has no rites or any observances to undergo till she becomes of a marriageable age. She then leaves her parents' house and goes to a building called the *Hola-Gudi*. This *Hola-*881 *Gudi* is a public place reserved exclusively for women and grown up (591) girls, and is a building that every Badaga village contains. She is presented with a new cloth by her parents and remains in the *Hola-Gudi* till the next full-moon day. All the families in the village bring to her one measure of wheat or *Korafi* flour from each

9: Natesa Sastri U-5 (no date) 1892
AW50 Badaga AW50

764 (539) 'May deaths cease, may sorrows cease, may everything be for our good; by the meritoriousness of our ancestors and by the meritoriousness of the ancestors of our ancestors. May this person (that has died) mingle with them':

After the bones have thus been passed round they are taken by (539) the three who displayed them and buried in a pit built of stone in the cremation ground with the following incantation:—

Doḍḍavar kunnavar śatti hatla
Akâlânda ikâlaga śattavakar śatti hatla
Kûṭṭâ kuṭumba ellâ ondâgi hoqali

'May the young and the old that have died, may all persons who have died from time immemorial up to the present time—may all these mingle into one'.

There is no difference at all as to the ceremonies observed on the third day. Those Badagas who cremate their dead perform exactly the same ceremonies on that day as those who bury.

121 We have thus examined as far as is possible the origin of the Baḍagas, and have seen that they are most probably immigrants from Maisûr. We have noticed the chief characteristics of the race and have traced a Baḍaga from his birth to his funeral. It has not been possible to give an account of all the ceremonies and customs of this interesting people but the main ones have been described, and it will be seen that they are essentially those of an agricultural people. It has been seen how prominent a place the buffalo and 796 the *Hâgôṭu* or milk-house hold in their religious ceremonies. To 241 those already mentioned may be added the ceremony which takes place at the beginning of harvest when the first bundle of ripe ears of corn is brought home, husked, cooked with milk, placed in the 181 *Hâgôṭu* and eaten. The wants of the Baḍaga are few and his aspirations may be summed up in the following words:—*Kattadda erumê kareli bitta hola ellâ belêli*: 'May our buffaloes give us calves and may the fields yield us harvest'.

S. M. NATESA SASTRI.